

the best known example is yoga nidra, which has been the spiritual turning point for many practitioners.”

How Sri Swamiji combined ancient practices with his own experiences and an understanding of the needs of the seeker in the current age becomes clear when he describes the birth of yoga nidra.

Birth of yoga nidra

“When I was living with my guru, Swami Sivananda, in Rishikesh, I had a very important experience which triggered my interest in developing the science of yoga nidra. I had been appointed to watch over a Sanskrit school where small boys were learning to chant the Vedas. It was my duty to remain awake all night to guard the school while the acharya was away. At 3 am I used

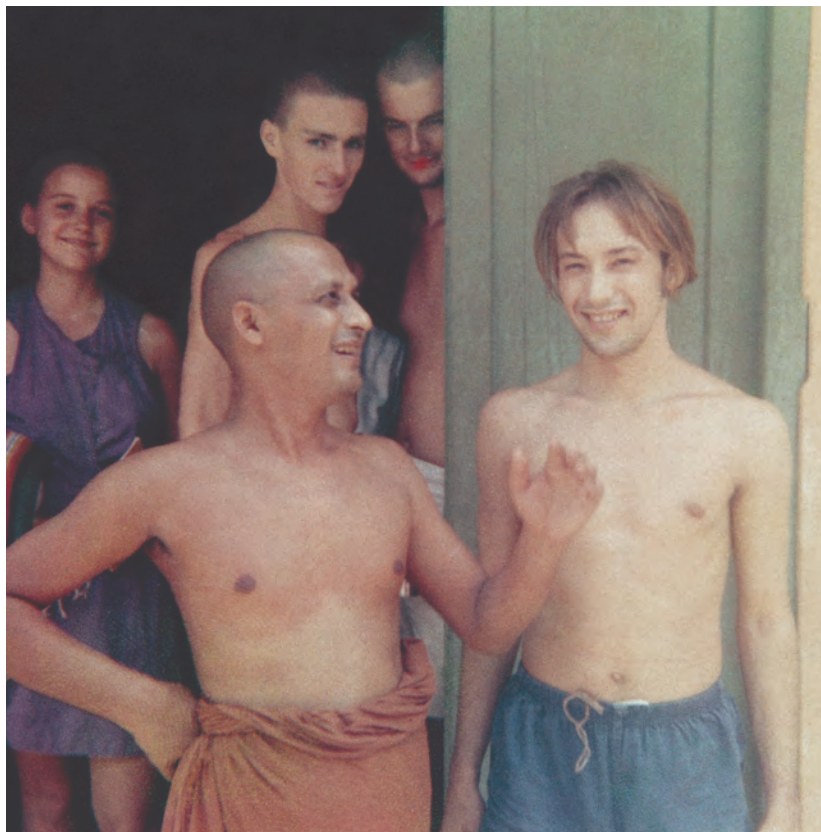
to fall into a deep sleep, and at six I would get up and return to the ashram. Meanwhile, the boys got up at four, bathed and chanted Sanskrit prayers, but I never heard them.

Some time later, my ashram was holding a large function, and the boys of that Sanskrit school were brought to chant the vedic mantras. During the function they recited certain slokas which I did not know, yet somehow I felt that I had heard them before. As I listened, the feeling grew stronger, and I tried in vain to remember where and when I had heard them. I was absolutely certain that I had never read or written them, yet they sounded so familiar to me.

Finally, I decided to ask the boys’ guru, who was seated nearby, if he could explain the meaning of this. What he told me

changed my entire outlook on life. He said that this feeling of familiarity was not at all surprising, because my subtle body had heard the boys chanting the same mantras many times while I was sleeping in their school. This was a great revelation to me. I knew that knowledge is transmitted directly through the senses, but from this experience I realized that you can also gain direct knowledge without any sensory medium as well. That was the birth of yoga nidra.

From that experience, further ideas and insights came to my mind. I realized that sleep was not a state of total unconsciousness. When one is asleep, there remains a state of potentiality, a form of awareness that is awake and fully alert to the outer situations. I found by training the mind, it is possible to utilize this state.





After this discovery, I began studying the tantric scriptures in a new light. I came across many important but little known practices, which interested me greatly. After practising them myself, I decided to construct a new system called yoga nidra which would incorporate the essence of these practices without having complicated ritualistic drawbacks."

The scientific approach was what caught the attention of Rishi Vasishtha, a pioneer of satellite technology himself. He had been studying and practising yoga since the mid-fifties in the USA when not many yoga teachers were available, though good books had been published. When he met Sri Swamiji in Vienna, he felt he could now make his yoga more practical due to Sri Swamiji's expertise in the methodology of meditation. He explains how

the approach helped the spread of BSY and its tradition.

He built solidly

"Because of the fact that Swami Satyananda taught, first of all, only six asanas or kriyas it was easy for everyone to remember them, especially since he always taught all components together. When you learned an asana, you were taught how to breathe, where the mind should be, where the concentration should be, what the purpose of the asana or the kriya was. Usually all this would be explained in a very good lecture that came along with the practice and prepared you for it.

He taught yoga nidra from the beginning and antar mouna from the first or second time. He picked a small set of very powerful techniques, taught those, and said to all of us, and we

were hundreds, 'Practise those six techniques, practise the pranayama I taught you, practise the pratyahara I taught you. Practise that for a year, then I'll be back and I'll teach the next round.' And we could remember it right after he had taught them to us. We didn't have to read books, it was so easy.

Instead of teaching arbitrary pieces of yoga, he always had a definite plan, an exact set of easily remembered, integrated techniques that covered all aspects of the personality. Easy for us to remember, easy for us to teach, and he encouraged all of us, every one of the 500 or so people, to teach. For instance, he did not want us to form one group of people. If we had differences of opinion, he would never take anyone's side. He would always say, 'Don't worry about it, you teach yours, they will teach theirs.' He actually encouraged everyone to

teach independently and not to form large groups. He never supported any differences or fights that developed.

From the very first time he came, he prepared us to teach. Since he only taught us so little in terms of what we had to remember, and so much in terms of potency, almost everyone became a very efficient teacher. Then the next year he came and taught a few more techniques, and we taught those. The next year he taught even more practices. So he built solidly always on the basis of yoga practices which covered all aspects of the personality, never neglecting one part, never emphasizing one part over others, always producing balanced overall practices. In this way, by the time he had visited us five or six times, we all had a very deep knowledge of the practices we had practised for one, two or three years.



Even today, when we teach, teachers from other schools who have been teaching yoga for years say, 'In all these years we never had yoga like this.' That is because Swami Satyananda had constructed something which had every component in it. It was a complete sadhana for the whole personality, all the way from the physical body to the spiritual and, therefore, though it was small it was much more potent than lots of exercise. Many teachers would often ask us, 'When are you going to speed up your practice, when are you going to get faster?' And we would say, 'With yoga, the deeper it gets, the slower it gets.'

This was Swami Satyananda's style. He gave you just as much as you needed and if you faithfully followed it and practised it for a year, it was like a little atomic bomb. It would open doors and last you a lifetime.

Swami Satyananda was the first great scientist of yoga. One of the characteristics of a great scientific mind is the ability to change everything back to basic principles, eliminating all irrelevant factors and then reconstructing systematically from these basic principles. If you look at any of the practices that Swami Satyananda has developed, you will find this property. He took all of the practices, eliminated all the mystery, all the irrelevant factors, took it back to basic principles and reconstructed it in a systematic manner.

Arundhati and I had the opportunity of not only learning those techniques directly from him, but it was our task to transcribe the notes from tapes, word for word, after he left. What we found was that when Swami Satyananda taught these practices, there was not a word out of place, there was not an instruction that was not



necessary. And the structure was immaculate. The more we transcribed, the more we realized how great the structure really was.

Look at all the practices carefully. No one has systematized them so masterfully. Swami Satyananda took a very careful approach to discover the essential components of these techniques. Those are aspects that are clear indications of a great scientific mind."

The seventies, in fact, were a period when many people came to hear of yoga for the first time in the West and began to investigate this extraordinary science. Dr Swami Karmananda can give the example of his own life. Although it would take him one more year to actually make the journey to Munger, he was already hooked in 1974.

Yoga as a science

"I first encountered yoga through Sri Swamiji's teachings in 1973 when I was a junior medical student at Sydney University, Australia. I found that yoga practices helped to balance my mind and emotions, improved my capacities for concentration and study, and my personal health improved markedly within six months of regular practice. Soon after, I began to feel the longing for spiritual knowledge and the need for a guru. At that time I was lucky enough to receive mantra diksha from Swami Amritananda, who visited Australia in 1974.

I first came to Munger in 1975 during the elective term before the final year for medical training. This was a three-month term in which students were encouraged to seek

experience in an area of medicine which held particular attraction for them. I had found the BSY publications presented yoga in a practical and scientific manner in relation to health problems, so I decided to come to BSY to meet Sri Swamiji and to study the therapeutic applications of the practices.

I first met Sri Swamiji and his disciples in Rajnandgaon in November 1975. They were so noble and bright. My heart leapt and soared. I was so happy to have discovered the path of discipleship. From that point on I tried very hard to serve my guru, and he began the long and frustrating task of overhauling my personality and misconceptions so that I might see the inner light.

I had travelled to India with a close friend from medical school, and when Sri Swamiji gave us sannyasa diksha on Basant Panchami in 1976, he became Shankardevananda and I became Karmananda. Sri Swamiji is a very firm and disciplined teacher. In order to experience the bliss in which he dwells we had to forget our former lifestyles and learn to live like him, simply and strictly, as sannyasins with a higher vision and a mission. My memories of those years are vivid. It was like being on an express train rushing towards infinity. The faster it went, the more joy there was. Bliss was so tangible, you could taste it.

The old BSY ashram was the most remarkable place. It was absolutely permeated with guru-shakti from top to bottom. Such a small, confined area with so many people living, working, sleeping, singing and practising yoga, and Sri Swamiji at the centre, generating and distributing so much energy, like a power station. Only a satguru could have managed and maintained the intensity of that blessed place even for a day, yet I know it went on, day in and day out for years and years.

There were so many swamis and aspirants, and many of us with mental and emotional difficulties that close communal living and working was bound to bring out into the open. I feel that I grew up there amongst friends from

every continent and culture on earth. Everything was kept so clean and tidy, and there were swamis sleeping everywhere – in stairwells, beside the printing machines, on the roof. Your workplace became your resting place as well! Then, of course, the Ganga would flood every couple of years and the whole ashram would be under water and isolated, with all the inmates living above first floor level. It was so hard yet so much fun. At night after dinner we would crowd into Gokul, Sri Swamiji's tiny room, for satsang.

Karma yoga was the basic thread linking all the experiences together, every moment of the day. Karma yoga in the press, cleaning, gardening, so many tasks that I seemed to be working in my sleep. It was such a joyful time and for the first time I understood how one is meant to live one's life.



As a result of religious brainwashing as a child, I had been left with a bitter taste for God, his gospels and his representatives. Arriving at university I had a difficult time attempting to fit those simplistic notions into the real world. I wanted so much to escape from the concepts of guilt and sin which had been inserted into my brain before I was able to analyze, accept or reject them. How I hated and resented that conditioning which was already inside me. Even as I write these words, I know there are millions of other people who have been victims of the same process and who suffer meaninglessly throughout their lives as a result. I hope and pray that they meet a great spiritual teacher like Sri Swamiji.

Sri Swamiji is a man who never spoke about God. On principle he would not do it. Not only that, but sometimes he spoke out against religious institutions of the world because of their negative influence on the expansion of individual awareness. It was not, of course, that he was against God, for he is immersed in God, nor was he against the great masters from every tradition who have come, taught, and left. Nevertheless he did describe institutionalized religion as 'the cruellest invention of man'. I, for one, knew exactly what he was talking about. However, after a few years with Sri Swamiji I found that I was spontaneously seeing God in his person – his body, his voice, his clothing, everything was divine about his being. Soon after that, I found that I was seeing the divine everywhere, in every face, place and experience. Now I knew by experience what someone like Buddha or Lord Jesus had been like in flesh and blood. With that peculiar experience of darshan, a massive defect in my awareness was bridged forever.

During my time in the ashram I spent a lot of time in Sri Swamiji's presence. I used to meet him each morning and report on the sick. I used to sweep his quarters, I used to go out with him, he used to send me food. To this day I debate in my mind as to which aspect of his personality I like best. His love is so broad and so openly and easily given. He is an expression of love itself. Many times I would forget a patient, their welfare or their lunch, and he would always ask me about that particular one. We were all on his mind and he loved us all like that.

I remained at BSY until 1982. I did not initially plan to stay so long but I found that the life and the work of a sannyasin was so full, so simple, so free, that the question of returning to my medical work in Australia never entered my mind. Those six years were, without doubt, the most wonderful in my life. I made friends with literally thousands of Sri Swamiji's disciples all over India and worldwide, even today so many faces are vivid in my mind. From the medical point of view I saw many wonderful results when

yoga was applied to various diseases – hypertension, diabetes, asthma, rheumatoid arthritis and digestive problems. Literally thousands of sick and suffering people came to the ashram for yoga therapy and health management. I came to believe from personal experience that practically every disease can be cured by determination, faithful yoga practice and the grace of guru.

When I did return to Australia in 1982 to complete my obligations as an RMO in hospital service, I found that in medical circles few could accept what I was saying about health and disease. Once I went to the Diabetic Association, who were having a public awareness week nationwide, and told the President that I had seen diabetes cured, not once but several times by the practice of asana, pranayama and hatha yoga kriyas. At first he was affronted and then a little angry, but I was a doctor from the same school as himself. Finally he acknowledged that it may be possible to manage diabetes by these techniques instead of medication, but thought saying this may cause confusion in the community. In any case, he said, there must be adequate clinical trials so as to prove or disprove these claims.

These ideas were uppermost in my mind when I returned to the ashram in 1984. If it is possible to cure disease through yoga, then we will have to prove it.

Over the years there have been many times when I believed that the healing in the ashram occurred through Sri Swamiji's siddhi or power, and that he was hiding his power so as to give the world and his devotees faith in yoga as a system and a science, rather than allow a personality cult to build up around him. Even today I wonder about it, but the more I experiment with the patients and students and the practices, the more I am convinced that yoga is a science, just as Sri Swamiji has always insisted."

While to some it was Sri Swamiji's scientific approach that appealed most, there were others who were struck by the divine light of the master. Sannyasi Anandapriya had her first darshan of Sri Swamiji in 1974, and continues to walk the path shown to her by her guru.



My first darshan

"It was in the early months of 1974 that I met my guru for the first time in the premises of Bihar School of Yoga at Munger. The meeting was not easily organized. After a long wait and desperation it was finally arranged by Swami Vijaya Premniti, one of Sri Swamiji's first disciples.

When I entered the small gate of BSY, it was like reaching your destination after a long tirtha yatra, pilgrimage. When I was led to the room where he was probably waiting for us, I had

the feeling that I would be meeting someone who and only who would lead me to God. As soon as I set my foot in the room I only saw a beautiful divine light. In that light appeared the frame of a human being with a divinely smiling face and lotus-like eyes looking straight at me. I lost my senses. My breath stopped. In my trance-like condition I could not believe what I saw. Everything was so beautiful. It felt as if I had longed to see this vision from time immemorial and this moment would never be lost in eternity.

I came out of the trance only when I heard him say, 'Come for class from tomorrow.' It seemed as if it was thus planned from a long time ago. It was very strange and this was exactly my heart's desire – to learn to walk the path to Shiva.

So I started coming early in the morning from the following day. Guruji was there as I would enter the sadhana hall and again when I came out. He could read every thought that I had and see the visions that I saw.

The sadhana, and maybe his shaktipat, affected me tremendously in a short period of four or five days. All worldly things seemed futile, even the taste for food changed abruptly, the sense of smell became unusually strong and the body felt so light as if it could fly in the air. I felt like remaining immersed in sadhana day and night.

However, I had many karmas to exhaust before I could advance on the path. When I went to Guruji before my departure from the ashram, he gave me some books. One which appealed to me immensely was a collection of letters written to a woman disciple. I read the one in which he had asked her to perform all her household duties assiduously, put vermilion on the forehead and do shringara as usual. He wrote that she must keep her husband pleased and blessed if she wants to progress in her spiritual sadhana. I felt that Guruji was saying all those things to me; it was his adesh, command. I felt that he was reminding me of my station in life.

His teachings have been with me from that time onwards. I continue to walk the path that he showed and know that I have a long way to go before I see the light at the end of the tunnel."

The Science of Pratyahara

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

When we practise yoga, we deal with our own consciousness. This consciousness is in the form of awareness, and it is normally associated with sensual, intellectual and mental knowledge. It functions through the lower medium and therefore Vedanta says that our awareness is associated with the senses, mind and prana. These are the finite mediums through which the awareness functions in the form of seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, feeling, thinking, acting, etc. This potential exists in animals as well as in every other sphere, visible and invisible. It is all taking place because of the power of consciousness. However, the lower forms are not aware of it. We, as human beings, have become aware of the consciousness. But it is only when we become aware of it in the spiritual sense that the consciousness becomes what is called God.

In yoga we try to withdraw the consciousness so that the field of knowledge becomes narrower in the realm of the visible world of external perception. We stop seeing, hearing, feeling, seeing, acting and thinking. For a certain time, we completely disassociate the awareness from objects. When, for example, you are standing opposite another person, your awareness is associated through the medium of the eyes. If you close your eyes there is a disassociation, but that is not enough to break the awareness because you still remember the other person. Thus your awareness is associated with the presence of the other person through the mind instead of the eyes. In yoga, one must withdraw the mind so that a person can be in front of you and even though you have seen him a hundred times, your awareness is completely free from your impressions of him. This is how the process of purification works. Here purification should not be understood in an ethical or moral sense; yoga speaks of purification of consciousness from the incoming and accumulated impressions as well as the impressions it may gather in the future.

When you close your eyes, your mind becomes free from external sounds. When you close your eyes, your mind becomes free from visual perceptions. If you withdraw your mind, your mind becomes free from thoughts, but what happens to the experiences of the past, the *samskaras*? These impressions which lie in the subliminal body decide the mode of functions of the awareness. You have to remove these impressions through the process of involution. Therefore, in yoga we first withdraw the senses, cut off the connections, and then the awareness becomes sense-free. This process is called *pratyahara*.

Pratyahara is the first state in yoga in which the awareness is disassociated from sense experiences. Yoga does not begin with asanas, nor with ethics and morality; yoga begins when all the sense perceptions are withdrawn. This state of pratyahara is where the lower scheme of yoga begins. The second process is control of the mind. The mind remembers through chitta, through memory. It remembers in the form of visions, thoughts, impressions, worries and anxieties. It is easy to withdraw your awareness from the senses, but it is very difficult to withdraw it from the mind.

Therefore, in order to consolidate the multiphase tendencies of the mind, there is a beautiful method known as *dharana*. *Dharana* means fixing the mind on an object after the senses have been withdrawn. The object could be gross, semi-gross or abstract, but the mind must have an object, a centre on which to fix itself and gradually consolidate all its faculties. Thus the field of the mind is made very narrow. This particular art of yoga is a process of negation. It is a process of involution. The personality is withdrawn, it becomes a point. When you have completely withdrawn the associations and awareness to a point in the form of a triangle, cross, flower, circle or sound, it functions exactly like a point.

The next step is to start developing and expanding the awareness. Whereas you were contracting your consciousness from a circle to a point, now this point is to be again developed



into the form of a circle. The difference is that the first circle was an objective, finite circle, whereas this is an infinite circle. This is the process of expansion of consciousness where the sense experiences are completely absent. Here yoga and Vedanta meet each other. Thus, perfected pratyahara implies that both the external sense perceptions and the thought processes are transcended. When this state is achieved, then dharana, concentration, will arise, leading to the state of *dhyana*, meditation.

There are several yoga practices that can achieve pratyahara. One of them is *ajapa japa*, the art of spontaneous meditation. In the beginning it is practised with the help of the breath. When you close your eyes, you don't withdraw yourself from objects, but bring your mind nearer to breath consciousness. You breathe normally, but you become aware of the process of breathing. If you maintain this awareness for about half an hour, you can transcend one phase of mental consciousness.

After continuous awareness of the breath, you try to discover the sound of the breath. You may succeed on the first day or after a few months. This sound is a psychic sound, not a physical sound. When the consciousness merges with the breath consciousness, the breath and mind become one. They are synchronized with each other. The mind becomes prana and prana becomes the mind; they operate as one entity. It is at that moment that the psychic sound, called *bija mantra*, seed mantra or root mantra, is discovered. When you are able to discover this mantra from the depth of your consciousness, it can be said that you have transcended. But it does not mean that you have transcended all the facts of objective awareness, it only means that you have transcended one step of external awareness. Once you have discovered the mantra, you may continue to use it.

The second process is *antar mouna* or 'inner silence'. You begin by letting the mind be aware of the physical body for some time, letting the awareness remain in the body. Now,

usually, when body consciousness comes to our mind, we try to avoid it, so that body consciousness is lost and then it comes again. However, in this method we know that we are thinking of the body, we are aware of the body and we are conscious of the existence of all bodily things. At the same time the concentration becomes so deep that after a while we switch from the body to the mind and become aware of the thought process which is taking place somewhere in the conscious and subconscious fields.

The body is gone, the mind remains. What is that mind? We experience the mind in the form of thoughts, emotions and certain subtle processes. You have to observe these also. Every thought that emerges from the subconscious level, every thought that comes in the form of a symbol, vision or idea, you must see as clearly as you can. Detach yourself completely. When you disidentify with the thought process, you will find that after a few days of practice you are beyond

the mind also. Although you were aware of the body and the mind, you lose the idea of both.

After that, the consciousness of 'I' comes. 'I' that is all, devoid of the idea of body or mind, just 'I' without any name or distinction of caste, creed or gender. Nothing, only awareness of 'I'. This awareness becomes so extended, so supreme, that there is a point where the difference between I and you, they, he, everything is lost. This is the final point of spiritual realization.

Ordinarily we are awake to the external world and asleep within. In spiritual terminology this is called *ajnana*, ignorance. When you are awake within and asleep to the outside world, it is *jnana*, knowledge. But when you are awake both within and without, it is *samadhi*. In *samadhi* the line of demarcation does not exist. When this happens, the mind becomes very powerful and creative. What it thinks and says does take place; it becomes the doer. ॐ





January

HH Sri Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Dwarakapeeth visited Rajnandgaon Yoga Vidyalaya in the presence of Swami Satyananda.

Sri Swamiji conducted a bhoomi pooja at the foundation of the Raipur centre.

February

The celebration of Basant Panchami was held in Munger.

March

Sri Swamiji went to Rajnandgaon to direct the organization of the All-India Convention. He presided over the Yoga Convention in Bilaspur and then directed a seminar at Bhilai Steel Plant, conducted by Swami Atmananda.

May

The Children's Yogic Training Course at Rajnandgaon was inaugurated by Sri Swamiji, who then travelled to Gua to preside over the Regional Yoga Convention.

June

Swami Nityabodhananda from BSY conducted a

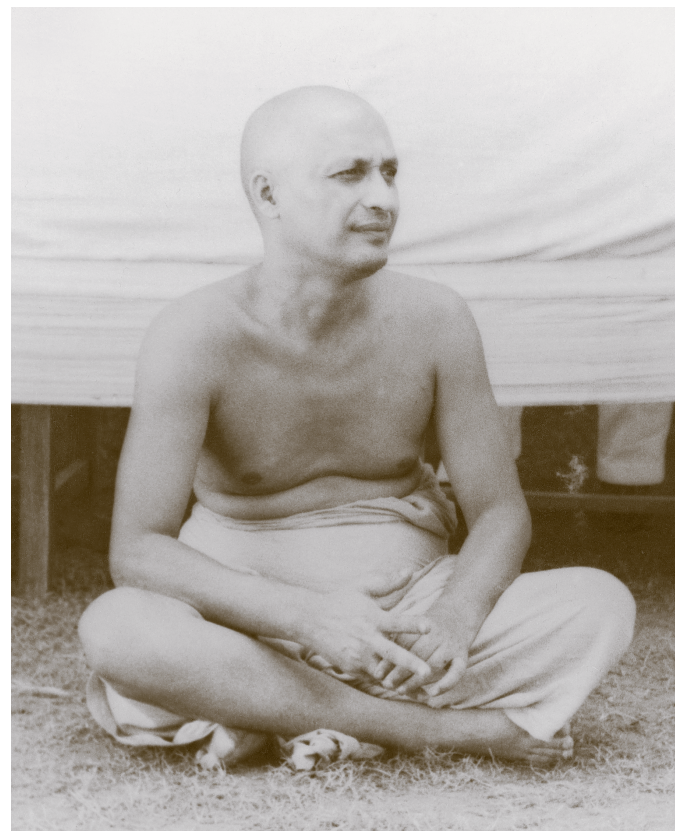
Teacher Training Course for school teachers in Dhanbad. Sri Swamiji inaugurated a yoga seminar at Jabalpur.

July

Guru Poornima was celebrated in Munger with a three-day program and satsang with Sri Swamiji. On the day of Guru Poornima, a group of sannyasins began a padayatra, a walking tour, to all parts of India. They were to spend only two days in any one place and travel on, spreading the message of yoga.

October

Sri Swamiji travelled to Bogota, Colombia, for the World Yoga Convention. He then visited Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Chile, Panama, Argentina, Guatemala, Uruguay, El Salvador, Paraguay,



Mexico and other countries in South America. He also travelled to Trinidad, Barcelona, Copenhagen and Paris.

November

Sri Swamiji returned to Munger, then went to Rajnandgaon to inaugurate the Yoga Convention. He inaugurated meditation classes in Rajnandgaon and in the afternoon continued on to Raigarh to install Swami Vajrapani from BSY as acharya.

December

Sri Swamiji conducted a yoga seminar in Mumbai.



As I was walking past Jyoti Mandir one afternoon, I was stopped in my tracks by the strains of a most beautiful bhajan. I stepped inside and discovered to my delight that my young friend was at the harmonium with Kaivalyanandaji helping him along. I quietly settled into a corner of this most peaceful of spots in the ashram – jyoti mandir, temple of light, where a single flame has been burning perennially ever since it was lit in 1963.

As we walked out and I complimented this most determined learner on his newfound talent, he admitted: "I was inspired by the evening programs. It is such a nice way to end the day."

"The Sanskrit mantras and stotras change one's vibratory field, you know," I offered.

"And when we move into kirtans – that method, repeating the same words again and again as the tempo rises and falls; the singer, drummer and cymbal-player moving in sync to each other's rhythms; the pitch rising, hands clapping . . . it's like a wave passing through the entire gathering. All the stresses of the day drop off automatically. How did this tradition start?"

"Evening prayers are an intrinsic part of the Indian ashram culture. But our style of the evening program is a legacy of Swami Sivananda – he was extremely fond of kirtans. So it has been a tradition in our ashram from the very beginning. Many things have changed, but not the kirtans."

"We were in 1974 the last time we spoke," reminded my attentive listener. "So what did change?"

"Well, after ten years of existence, BSY had been transformed significantly," I resumed the story. "A small printing press was now functional in order to print all the letters and pamphlets as well as the yoga publications. Other facilities were being added slowly. Never allowing things to fall into stagnation, in 1975 Sri Swamiji arranged a new challenge for his sannyasins. They went on a walking tour throughout India, observing the ancient discipline of not staying in any one place for more than two days. As they travelled, they taught yoga and gave satsang as the occasion demanded."

The first South American Yoga Convention was held this year in Bogota, inspired and presided over by Sri Swamiji. His



visit sparked off an interest in yoga across a wide section of the Colombian society, so that the future would see this country take to the yoga movement with unmatched enthusiasm. Soon after the convention, the Colombian government incorporated yoga in its education program and many priests and nuns applied it in their work. Adan Londonio, a Jesuit priest who introduced yoga into the Colombian Working Youth Movement, said this about his tryst with yoga.

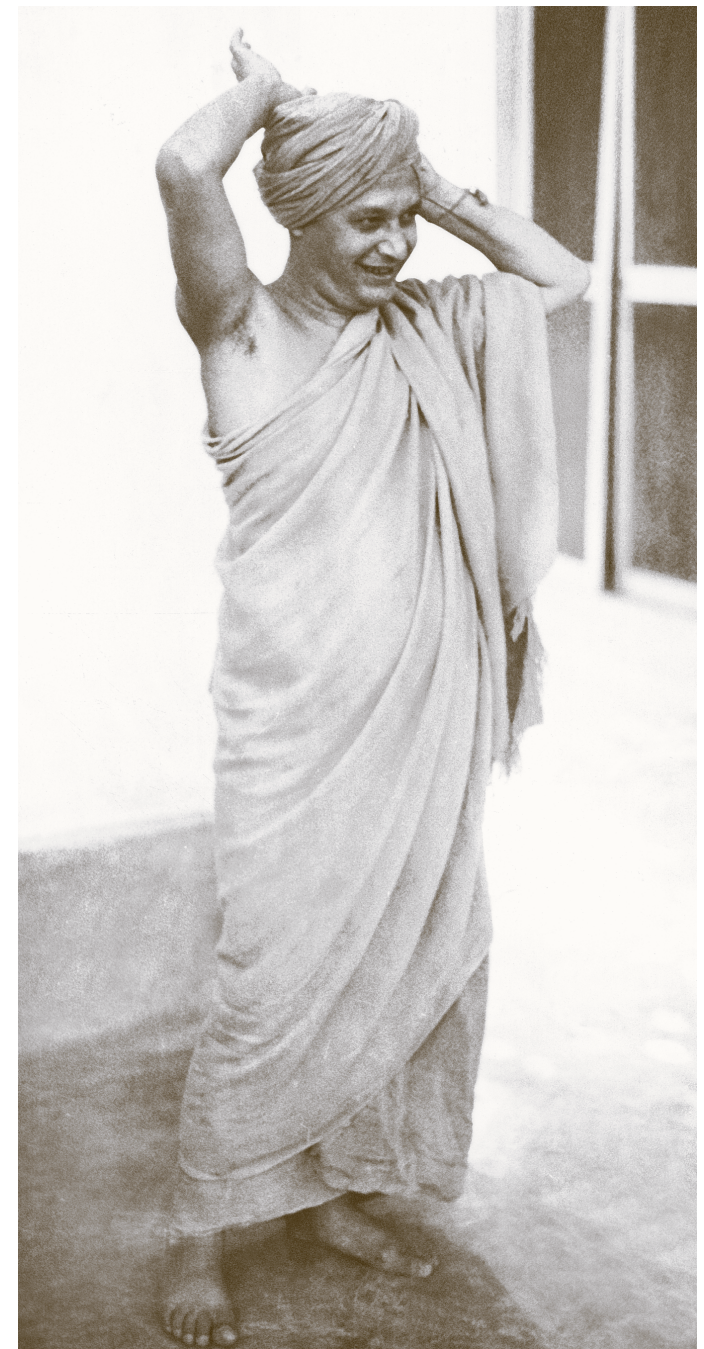
A great discovery

"Until I came in contact with Satyananda Yoga, I had very vague ideas about yoga though I wanted to learn more about it. God gave me this opportunity one afternoon at our country ashram in El Ocaso, Colombia, where forty aspirants were participating in an intensive yoga seminar. I was introduced to the person responsible for the course, Swami Yogashakti, and this meeting made an unforgettable impression on me. She told me about her work and about Swami Satyananda and his school. This was what I had been looking for and I immediately began to practise yoga.

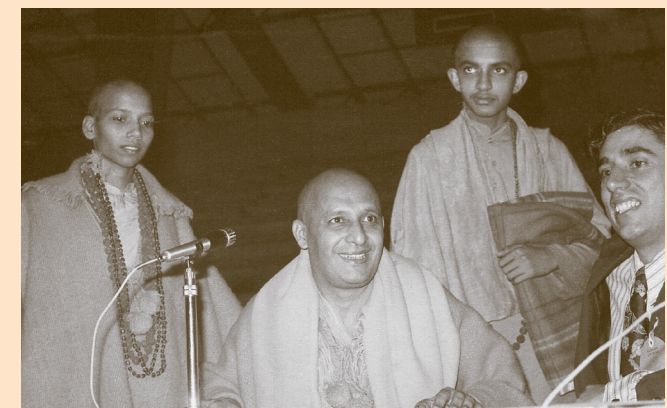
Because of its simplicity, progressiveness and coherence, I am now convinced that yoga is a great science and its techniques provide a valuable experience. I would never have thought that at the age of fifty-five, I could obtain such favourable results after only a few months of practice. As far as my physical health is concerned, I feel far stronger and more dynamic. Working without tension makes me more efficient and understanding of others. I find myself better able to carry out the work of a priest.

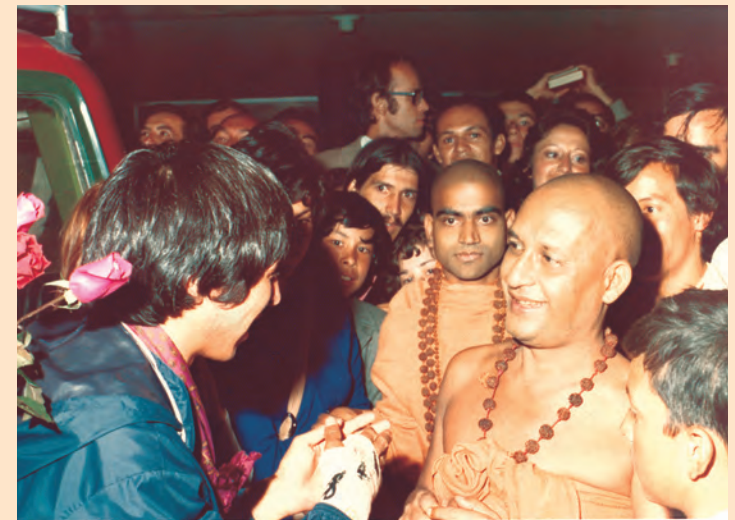
Now I believe that spreading yoga is an apostolic mission, and I consider yoga to be very helpful for religious communities. I have dedicated my life to helping the lower classes, especially the young workers and am constantly looking for better ways and means of bringing yoga to the labourers and country people. I feel that poor people are precisely the ones who need yoga most, for it is the most economic way to good physical and mental health.

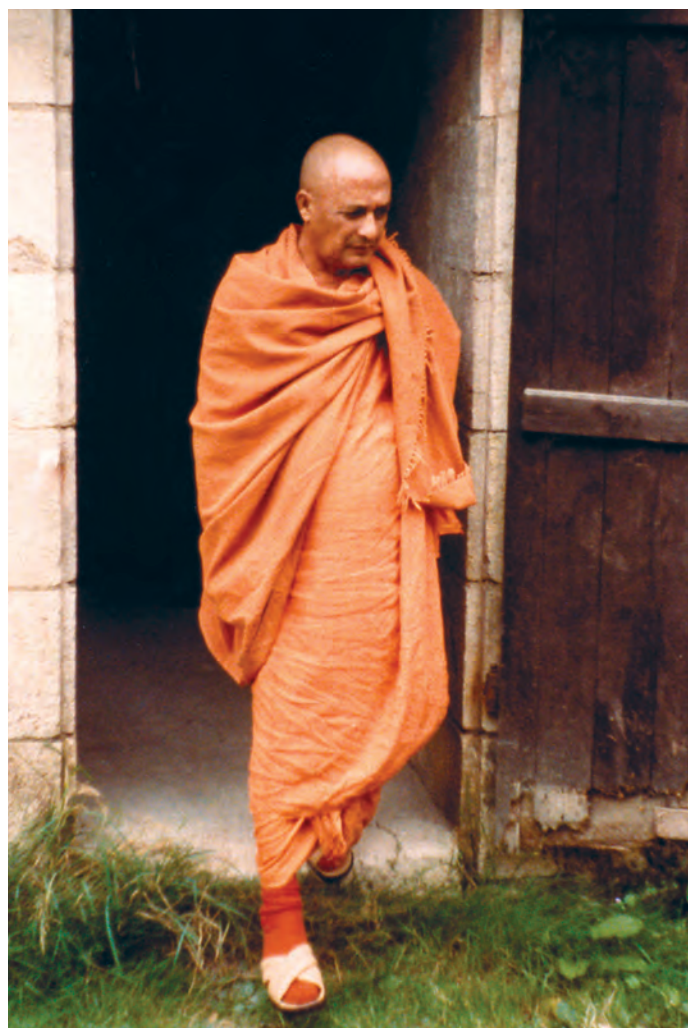
With the backing of Swami Satyananda, Swami Yogashakti and Dr Fernando Sanz Manrique, president of the Bogota



Glimpses of World Yoga Convention, 1975







School of Yoga, I have been able to introduce yoga to the Colombian Working Youth Movement. Their leaders were quick to understand the importance of yoga and now swamis give classes to them regularly. Yoga is already becoming very popular with the young workers of Colombia."

Back in Munger, the pace was hectic. The ashramites were often required to undertake tasks they had never before attempted in their lives, but under Sri Swamiji's guidance and



grace, they would finish them flawlessly. The ashram press was one such example of the spirit of karma yoga that Sri Swamiji instilled in his sannyasins. Here is an account of what it took to accomplish the mammoth publishing tasks of the ashram.

The press-ure cooker

"Ashram Graphics, the BSY Printing Press was first established at Sivananda Ashram for the Golden Jubilee celebrations. Of course Sri Swamiji knew all about printing because he had managed his

guru's press in Rishikesh for many years, but none of the young swamis did. So Sri Swamiji sent one swami to Delhi to purchase the first printing machines and learn the whole printing process from top to bottom. Three months later he returned to Munger with the basic machinery and knowledge required to start the press. With constant effort and encouragement from Sri Swamiji the work began. The swamis had to learn everything quickly, from composing to binding.

At that time there were two small treadle printing machines, one hand-operated stitching or stapling machine, one old style semi-automatic letter press printing machine which could print four pages, and an old hand-operated cutting machine which required three strong swamis to operate it, two for turning the big wheel and one to place the paper and change the adjustments.

In the beginning, working days were long, each day of the week starting at 6 am and finishing when the job was complete. Often the work went on day and night, and there were also some days when Mooladhara, the printing department, was silent in deep slumber. It all depended on Sri Swamiji for he kept a watchful eye on all the press activities and guided the work at every level.

Before printing, the matter was first prepared in Swadisthana, the composing department. To compose one page of matter, which usually consisted of 36 lines, took hours. An average of three to four pages a day was the maximum output for an experienced composer swami. Sri Swamiji himself used to inspect all the proofs at different stages of printing and make corrections and suggestions, then he would okay the order and write on it the number to be printed. Nothing was printed without his signature. His interest in press work was vital, inspiring the swamis to learn and experience a new and, at that time, exciting venture.

Until 1976 nearly all the press work was done by hand. The production output was a long procedure, but in spite of this, the press managed to supply 500 Kriya magazines each month in Hindi and 500 in English. Publication of books and office supplies also went on simultaneously.

By the end of 1976 production was too slow to keep up with the increasing work load, and printing standards had to be improved and raised. Swamis also needed to be given the opportunity to expand their technology in the printing field. It was now time to step up production with more modern equipment. A new challenge arose.



A great change took place in the press with the addition of an English linotype, and a Hindi and English monotype caster with its dainty partner, the punching machine. These long-awaited machines arrived at the ashram at the end of 1976. Two fully automatic HMT printing machines also arrived around the same time. Installation was a long and tiring process. Doors and walls were knocked out to make way. With Sri Swamiji giving the directions and much heavy pushing and pulling, the huge bulky machines were finally manoeuvred into position.

The whole printing production was greatly accelerated and highly charged with all these new machines. Printing was now done very fast. The continuous whirring of the printing machines as they piled up stacks of printed forms under their mechanical arms, the rhythmic *chak, chak, chak* of the mono caster as it spewed out letters one at a time and formed them into perfect lines, the jingle, jingle of the lino as it dropped letters down into a slot to be cast into a solid line of matter, all these machines

working together created a high voltage atmosphere and raised the energy level throughout the whole ashram. It was a real manifestation of Shakti – the awakening of mooladhara, and during those times the pulse of the press throbbed with unceasing activity.

The amazing thing was that the entire press was managed and run by sannyasins, many of whom had never touched a machine in their lives before coming to the ashram. Swamis were not only operators, but in the case of a breakdown they were expected to be able to do repairs. So it was necessary to be very inventive with what few materials were available for repairing the machines. Only by trial and error did we learn.

In November 1976 printing of the new revised editions of Yoga and Yoga Vidya monthly journals began from Munger. For the first issue, 15,000 copies in Hindi and in English were printed. This was a gigantic task for the press at that time. All the swamis were recruited for work each night up to 8 or 9 pm until the magazines were completed.

Folding was a massive job with 120,000 sheets to be hand-folded for 30,000 magazines and also 30,000 covers to fold. To complete this project the whole ashram participated. All departments were closed and swamis as well as visitors and even the kitchen staff packed into the press. Fortunately it was the winter season, with energy and enthusiasm at a peak. So we all rugged up and sat folding day and night. Sri Swamiji was with us during the entire time encouraging us.

In July came the long and eagerly awaited semi-auto folding machine capable of doing three folds. It was delivered to Munger Railway Station in dismantled parts. It was carried back to the ashram and soon we had it assembled and operating at top efficiency. Now the only hand work left was compiling and stitching which were both quite simple and fast.

These were truly golden years in the press, when discipline was maintained and devotion to the work was high. Those who managed to pass through the difficulties of these strenuous times, came to know the pleasure and pain, laughter and tears

of simple and continuous work. Everything was done with maximum awareness and efficiency and also at maximum speed.

Apart from the constant pressure of getting all the work done on time, there were also many other challenges. The weather for six months of the year was unbearably hot. Often there were electricity cuts throughout the day which meant no fans. When it was hot there was no escape from the situation. At the end of the day machines had to be cleaned, the surrounding area cleaned, tool boards arranged and all tools checked. This routine was a daily practice. Oiling and a thorough check of nuts and bolts was done each morning without fail.

At 4.30 pm the work generally stopped and a thorough cleaning of the whole press would begin under supervision. In a rather exhausted state, the swamis would sign off and go to their rooms, though many times after dinner, they would return to the press for a few hours, depending on the urgency of the work. The tension would rise as the work energy increased and there was no time for sympathy or feeling exhausted. Of course if you cracked up or threw a tantrum that was okay too. Work just seemed to carry on around these situations. A consciousness of true affection and devotion to work grew, along with strength and stability to contain oneself under the most arduous and disturbing conditions.

This sadhana taught endurance, going for long stretches without sleep and food, working and working until the mind stopped – no thinking, no worrying, no thought of tomorrow – a true lesson in karma yoga! One swami says, 'I was pushed to the point of wondering what I was doing there! At these times I would turn around and there would be Sri Swamiji. He would just smile and go.'

There was a constant awareness that Sri Swamiji's energy, inspiration and love was right behind the work. In this way there was a great and noticeable transformation in the personality in a very short time. Continual noise, intense heat

over a melting pot of 650 °F tested the limits of endurance – this was tapasya!

The swamis saw the books that they had written through transmission from Sri Swamiji, through every process from writing and editing to composing, printing and binding. It was not just a printing of books but a profound imprinting of the most powerful samskaras of their lives."



Yoga Nidra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

I want to share some ideas about yoga nidra because I feel that it is important to understand yoga nidra in a broader perspective. Yoga nidra is a practice derived from the tantric tradition. The literal meaning of *yoga nidra* is profound sleep with union. Therefore, the purpose of yoga nidra is union between external and internal consciousness. All the practices of meditation are usually practised in asanas such as padmasana, siddhasana, etc., but the practice of yoga nidra is done while lying down, while you are relaxing yourself completely.

Many years ago when I formulated the practice of yoga nidra, it was not possible for people to understand what it was. But later I was able to explain to them that yoga nidra had already been instructed in the tantric texts, where its efficiency is clearly mentioned. Most people think that if they have sound sleep at night, they are relaxed, but in fact this is not relaxation. Sleep rests the body, but yoga nidra rests both mind and body. When you are asleep, your consciousness sleeps in your astral body, but in yoga nidra your consciousness is awake within.

In the practice of yoga nidra there is special emphasis on the maintenance of unification of awareness during the state of relaxation. This means that your consciousness which is normally extroverted should become unified and totally aware inwardly during the process of relaxation. Therefore, yoga nidra literally means relaxation by following a process of unification of the mind.

In Patanjali's raja yoga there is a state called pratyahara when the mind and mental awareness are disassociated from the sensory channels. The perfection of pratyahara leads to concentration and then to meditation. Yoga nidra is one aspect or form of pratyahara. When one practises yoga

nidra, one is not asleep. The consciousness is functioning in a certain state of awareness. It is a state in which you are neither asleep nor awake.

Yoga nidra is a state in which there is awareness of the conscious, subconscious and unconscious fields of the mind all at the same time. This profound state of consciousness is such that even the sense of self-awareness is completely consumed. When you are concentrating, you know you are concentrating, but when you are in yoga nidra, there comes a moment when you do not know that you are in yoga nidra. When the mind disassociates itself from the sensory channels, it becomes very powerful, but then it needs training. The involuntary systems of the brain have to be properly trained; otherwise, there is practically no difference between ordinary sleep and yoga nidra.

Yoga nidra performs two beneficial functions. It removes fatigue and invigorates the body, and it removes tensions and restores the elasticity of the mind. The dross of day-to-day life is deposited in the subconscious mind and in due course it exerts a deleterious influence on one's mental makeup. Just as a house must be swept daily to keep it clean, similarly to have a normal personality, the *samskaras*, the mental dirt that accumulates daily in the subconscious, must be removed. Yoga nidra performs this essential service for us, removing our mental abnormalities and clearing the way to spiritual progress.

Patanjali has defined yoga as the control of *chitta vrittis*, mental modifications. Good behaviour is the outcome of *chitta vrittis*; our conscious, subconscious, and unconscious fields are our *chitta*. Simultaneous awareness of these three



fields is *aham asmi*, 'I am'. This state, in which you are aware but not aware that you are aware, is experienced in yoga nidra. Thereafter a process of sure but imperceptible sublimation takes place within.

It is said that meditation creates a fire which burns away our sins. What is sin? Actions that create uneasiness and abnormal feelings in the mind are sins. Cynics dismiss the word 'sin' with a smile of derision. Whenever your conscience pricks you for any action of yours, that is sin. Cynics are no exception to this rule; sin is there whether you admit it or not. In meditation your consciousness penetrates the various layers of your inner self. This is the fire that burns away the dross of samskaras within. Thereafter comes the yogic state of supreme peace and tranquillity of mind described in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. Yoga nidra is one of the main techniques for the attainment of this peace.

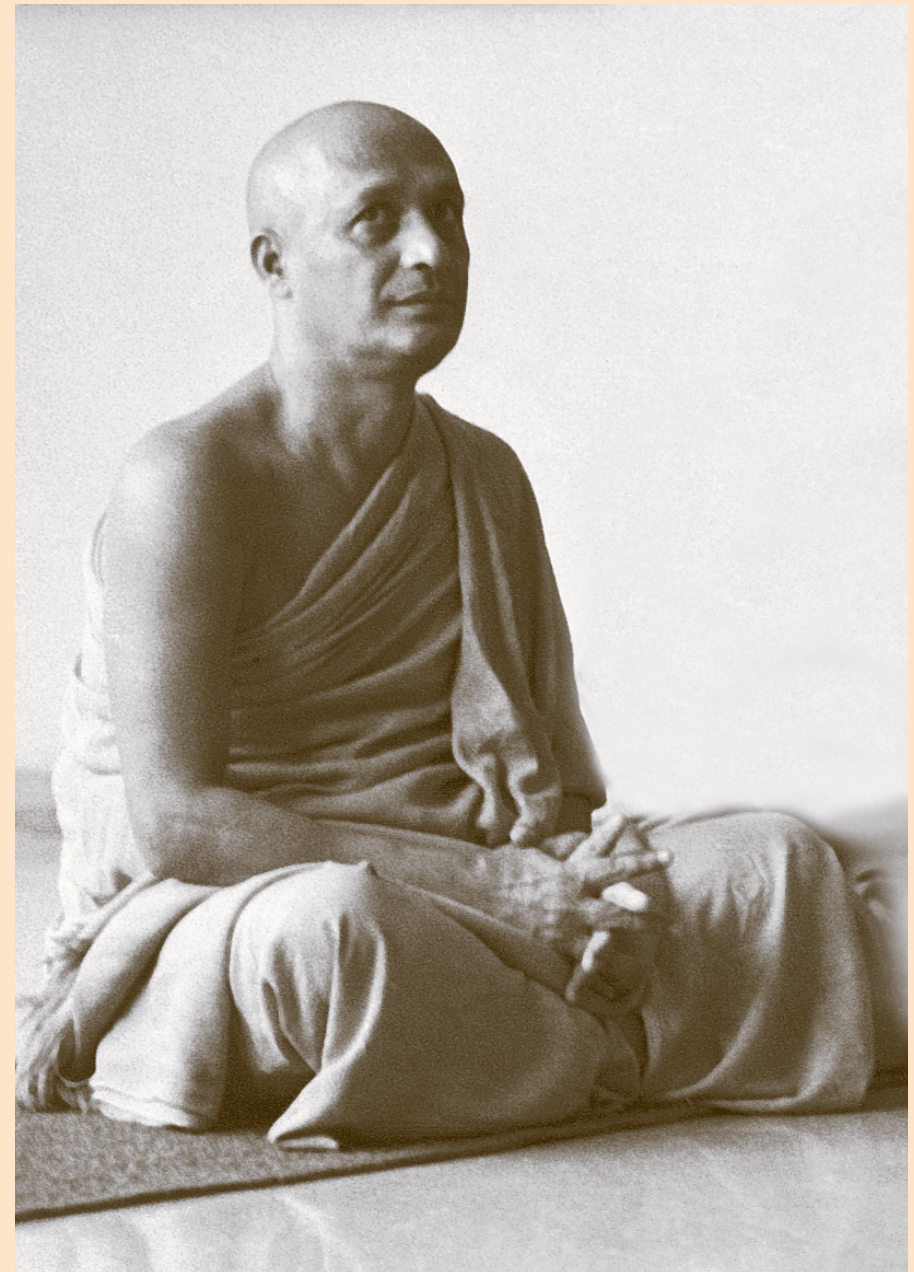
Most diseases and errors in behaviour which you attribute to your present circumstances have an intimate connection with your past, your early childhood. This means that diseases pertaining to the body and also the problems pertaining to your mind, your difficulty in adjusting with your circumstances and environment, are not necessarily due to the present circumstances. They may be deeply rooted in some of the impressions or experiences of your childhood. Therefore, it is necessary for everyone to follow the whole series of their experiences right from childhood. But these impressions and experiences are so strongly embedded in the subconscious that unless total relaxation of the mind takes place they do not

really come up. You can never see them, feel them or know them. It is only when complete relaxation has taken place, when the mind, the senses and the present experiences are withdrawn that the subconscious mind emerges and comes up to the surface level.

During yoga nidra, the subconscious mind is brought to the surface and you are able to perceive a series of experiences, of karma or impressions, which have been buried in your subconscious mind for years, from your childhood up to this day. So, in yoga nidra, the emphasis is on relaxation together with unified awareness or total awareness.

How to practise yoga nidra? First do a few asanas and pranayamas and follow them up with yoga nidra. This technique is best learned from a guru. Not that it will cause any harm if you practice it without a guru's help, but if you do it on your own, the chances are that every time you begin you will end up falling asleep. Then your samskaras will not be destroyed and you will not make any progress. To be absolutely successful, yoga nidra presupposes a spirit of communion between the guru and disciple. Only that disciple who has complete reverence for the guru can receive the real benefits of yoga nidra.

Yoga nidra should not be practised immediately after meals. Trataka will increase the efficacy if practised before yoga nidra, but if it is found to be too difficult, shambhavi mudra or nasikagra drishti can be practised. If these preliminaries are performed, the guru is in a better position to help the disciple.



The all-important point in yoga nidra as well as other meditation practices is that you must not allow yourself to fall asleep. In yoga nidra sleep tries to overpower you. If you can overcome this weakness, you will gain in willpower, and through willpower you can achieve great things in life. If sleep comes, concentrate on the body or on the sleep itself as if it is trying to possess you and you are watching it. If images arise before your mind, go on watching them. In yoga nidra, when you feel that you are unconscious, it actually means that you are conscious of being unconscious. But if you sleep, if you lose your consciousness, then it is *nidra* (sleep) and not yoga nidra. Therefore, in yoga nidra the mind is not allowed to concentrate or unite at one particular point, but it is made to move from point to point.

It is always better to practise yoga nidra either with someone or with the help of a recording. If you practise yoga nidra by yourself, then there is a problem. You will retain your memory, your intellectual awareness throughout the practice and that should not be the case. The instructions should be the same, but it is better if they are recorded. Day after day, the same system should be repeated. The emphasis, the sentences, the arrangement, everything should be the same point by point; nothing should differ.

Those who want to influence themselves and impress their personality through yoga nidra must make some kind of a resolve, an auto-suggestion, at the beginning of the practice. The individual consciousness becomes so sensitive and receptive during the practice of yoga nidra that if you try to influence yourself you can. This indicates the importance of the deeper layers of the consciousness. There are much deeper, higher and more potential states of individual awareness than we are aware of at this moment. Every state of consciousness has its own limitations of experience. The particular state of consciousness in which we exist now is more limited than the subconscious state



which we usually experience in yoga nidra. So, in this psychic sleep there is a greater possibility to induce a new system of thinking, a new process of adjustment and also an absolutely new process of tranquillity.

I call yoga nidra 'taming the wild monkey'. It is a technique of taming this wild monkey, the human mind. This anarchical mind, this disorderly, broken and schizophrenic mind can be brought into a beautiful pattern if yoga nidra is practised correctly. ॐ



January

The All-India walking tour completed in Bihar, now began in Madhya Pradesh.

February–March

On the occasion of Basant Panchami, celebrations of BSY's foundation day were conducted for three days. Swami Yogeshwarananda from BSY toured Indonesia and the Philippines.

During February and March, Swami Satyananda travelled to Asansol and Kolkata, giving satsangs and seminars and speaking at the television company and to the Indian Chamber of Commerce on 'Hatha Yoga, Tantra and the Modern Age'. He also conducted satsangs and seminars in Allahabad, Supaul, Sambalpur, Raigarh, Rajnandgaon and Barhaiya.

May

Swami Satchidananda from BSY conducted yoga camps in Chaibasa, Killiburu, Jamshedpur, Jabalpur and Chopan.

Sri Swamiji travelled to Hazaribagh to conduct a special Kriya Yoga course and inaugurated the

Kriya Yoga Training Course at Kumardhubi, conducted by Swami Nischalananda from BSY.

Sri Swamiji conducted a seminar in Satna, accompanied by Swamis Amritananda and Yogamudrananda from BSY. Sri Swamiji then addressed a mass meeting at Maihar and opened the ladies branch of the Yoga Mandal in Jabalpur.

The Munger Children's Course was held with Swami Satyananda in the Kutir Ashram.



Swami Yogamudrananda left for Australia to assist the yoga work there.

June

Sri Swamiji and Swami Amritananda visited Sambalpur.

July–August

Sri Swamiji presided over Guru Poornima in Raigarh and conducted a function at the Ispat Club, Ranchi. He then toured South India, visiting Kolkata, Kharagpur, Cuttack, Visakhapatnam, Chennai, Mahabalipuram, Hyderabad, Nagpur, Jabalpur, and conducting a seminar at the Bhopal Management and Training Institute.

October

Sri Swamiji attended the World Yoga Convention in Sydney, Australia. Swami Niranjanananda had travelled from South America to be there with him for the convention and later remained in Australia to assist the ashram.

November

A National Yoga Convention was organized under Sri Swamiji's guidance at Raipur. Eminent and experienced yogis were invited to participate in this convention.

The Steel Yoga Convention was held in Bhilai under Sri Swamiji's direct guidance.

December

Sri Swamiji conducted the Bhopal Yoga Seminar.



This year Sri Swamiji toured extensively in India, and then in October travelled to Australia to inaugurate the World Yoga Convention accompanied by Swami Niranjan.

Delegates from all over the world attended this convention held at the Sydney Showground. For five days, accomplished yoga teachers gave lectures, practical classes and satsang. Sri Swamiji gave several press and radio interviews and initiated hundreds of aspirants into mantra. Sri Swamiji's talks were riveting because he always spoke of the practical benefits of yoga rather than its esoteric achievements. When, during an interview, a journalist

persistently wanted to know what siddhis and feats he had acquired, and whether he could stand on his head, he replied in characteristic style: "I can stand on my own two feet!"

The last day of the event was held at Mangrove Mountain ashram, where a large number of people gathered to enjoy open-air satsang and kirtan with Sri Swamiji. The success of this convention clearly indicated the energy and power that Sri Swamiji could generate during a spiritual gathering. It would seem that he had opened himself fully to the cosmic flow and was continuously transferring the higher awareness to those open to receive it. Swami Akhandananda describes Sri Swamiji's method of transmission at Mangrove Mountain ashram.

The master's touch

"How can we not be free when we are under such a perfect master? There is no doubt that he will help us to free ourselves from the tensions and tears which are really aching in our hearts as we carry on with day-to-day life: sitting, working, sleeping, eating or thinking. That is why Sri Swamiji is here. Not just to give us a lecture, not just to teach us prana vidya or nadi shodhana breathing or pawanmuktasana part one. What Sri Swamiji is offering is something which is the real need of our life. It is what we need, and we are learning more day by day.

Sri Swamiji is here to free our painful hearts. You can go to Satyananda Ashram or any other yoga school to learn pawanmuktasana; there are many teachers everywhere. But this is not what Sri Swamiji offers. There is no ordinary yoga teacher who can give you what Sri Swamiji has because it is not physical, it is not mental, it is not psychic, it is not emotional. It is beyond all this, and Sri Swamiji is moving us towards it by purification through different methods. He will give it to you when you are ready.

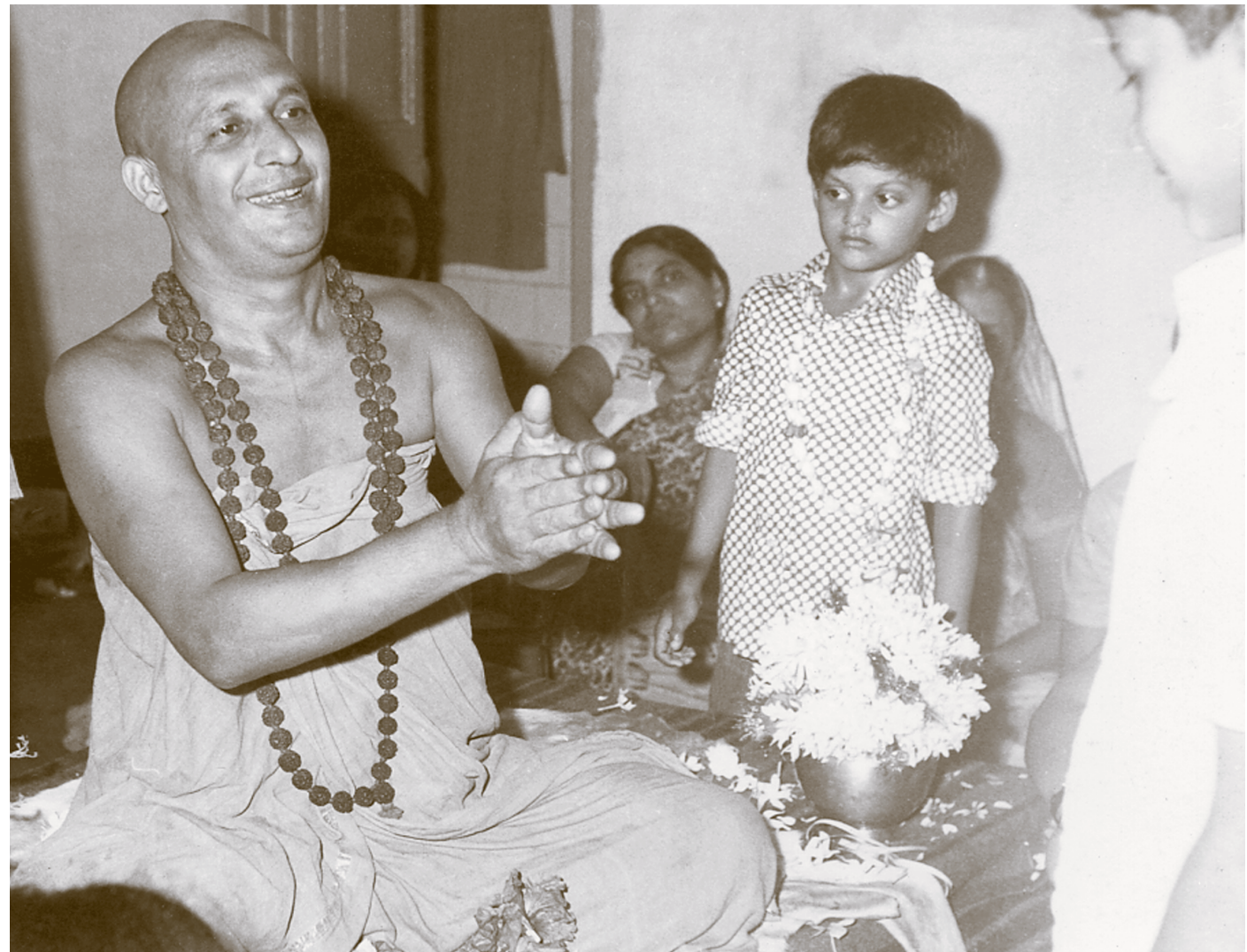
There are many people who have misconceptions about their way of life and yoga. They think that if they practise yoga they must reject the life they are leading. Some imagine that to practise yoga they must shave their heads, give up their

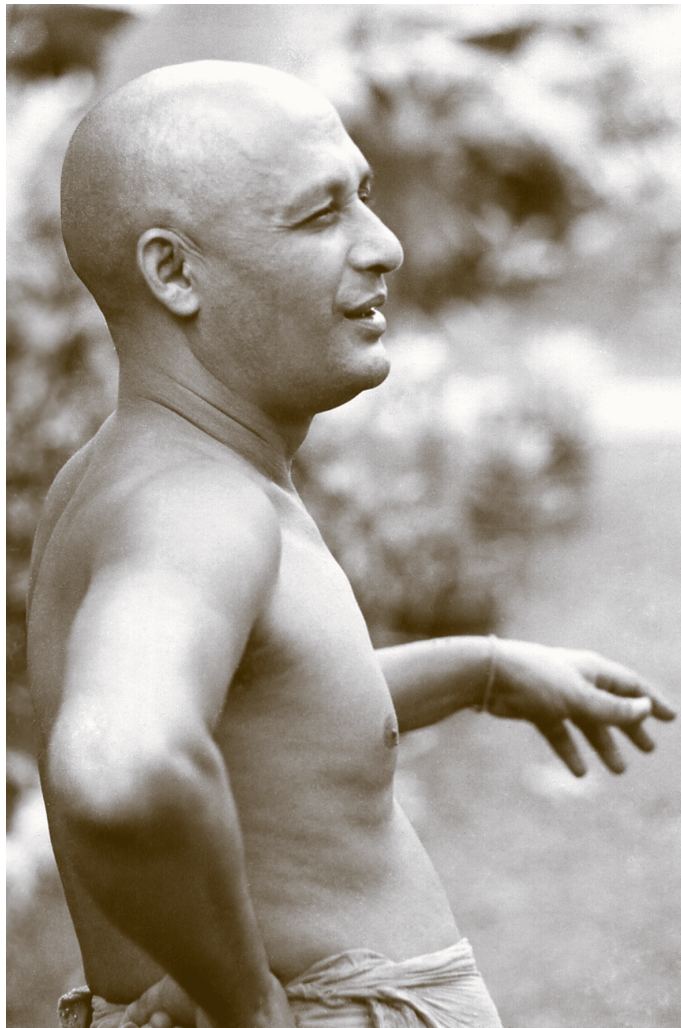
professions, go to the Himalayas, give up smoking, drinking and eating, stop going to the beach, etc. That is an absolutely wrong notion. Sri Swamiji says, never reject, but accept. Use the things which you need, and don't use the things you do not need. This means that you don't have to reject, you don't have to give up your way of life. We practise yoga in order to regain health, happiness and harmony, not to create pain."

Sri Swamiji's personality dazzled all those who came in contact with him. A regular visitor to the Munger ashram during these years, Dara D. Karkaria, paid tribute to him in the following words.

Seek, and I shall give

"Swami Satyananda Saraswati is a veritable spiritual gem of incalculable merit. In my knowledge, he is the youngest living





saint who is a dynamic karma yogi. He is gifted with wonderful abilities. He is an embodiment of simplicity, truth, serenity and agelessness. He is radiant with all the virtues of a great saint. Perfect desirelessness, unrivalled selflessness and absolute egolessness give him a unique place among the great saints. He has well moulded his life and is always on the lookout for moulding others. He is a karma yogi of the highest calibre. He is a master at giving the best wisdom from the Vedas,



the Bhagavad Gita and several other soul-stirring books. He believes in practical training. He is a person of silent endurance, humility coupled with dynamism, zeal, tireless industry and true spirit of dedication. He has one-pointed application to the tasks he undertakes.

Sri Swamiji has great devotion for his guru, Swami Sivananda Saraswati. He is firmly convinced that every bit of work connected with the ashram or public life, is nothing but guru seva. He has disciplined his mind and tongue perfectly.

Beloved Swamiji is a saint with great mission. His mission is to construct a community of persons whose culture is yogic, all their activities and modes of life are governed by the laws of yogic discipline and the essential knowledge of yoga. His mission is a source of divine contentment to him. He earnestly wishes the parents to realize the necessity of yogic discipline for their young generation to ensure a clean atmosphere in minds and society. In one of his spiritual books, Satyam Speaks, he says, 'A guru does not merely help his child in the spiritual way, but his help can be commanded – yes, not requested but commanded at every step of life. You can ask for my help and advice at any time for anything. This is my duty, my mission. I shall be thrice blessed if I can help those who need and seek. I know that sometimes a little sincere guidance from the one who understands, can destroy many self-invited frustrations and remove the imaginary layer of weakness in a man and bring out to light the power that is there in every soul.' Really, how great is his mission for the welfare of mankind!

May Lord Almighty bestow on our Sri Swamiji a long life to guide the suffering humanity on the path of self-realization."

Faith in the guru can move mountains. Shantidevi from Tasmania relates the psychic experience that changed her life and stirred her to dedicate her life to Sri Swamiji and his mission.

The transforming light

"One day as I was engaged in my daily household chores, I felt as if lights of many shapes and sizes had come alive before me.



Some were bright, some dim, all reflecting off colourful glass. I was mesmerized by them. Suddenly I thought of ajna chakra. The lights were moving at a slow speed on a road. The road ended at ajna, where I saw the most beautiful transparent image of my guru from which rays of an all-pervading light were flowing out. This was the brightest of all the lights and it felt as if it was their source. I started walking towards my guru's light. I wanted to get ahead of all the lights to reach it,

but my body and mind would not comply. I realized that when my body and mind stop revolting, then my journey to the light will be successful and I will receive divine experience and pure knowledge.

Thus now I am engaged in the service of those lights and I understand that the destination that I am moving towards is my own self. I am the traveller and I am also that which has been left behind. To complete the journey I will have to work for the welfare of all. From the day I realized this, I found that an invisible force guided my way. Now if someone comes to me with problems I simply think of my guru, and I receive the energy to solve their mental, physical and emotional problems. Prior to this I did not dare to teach yoga to anyone, but now when I see that people are benefiting, I delight in serving with every pore of my being. I wish that the lives of all aspirants become useful the way mine has through the grace of guru. On the spiritual path, grace of guru is essential."

Swami Nischalananda was another person who, scooped up from a faraway country by the inspiration of yoga, found a new perspective through Sri Swamiji's guidance.

Turning 180 degrees

"Born on the little island of Britain in the big city of London, from an early age, I was intent on having as good a time as possible in as short a time as possible. In response to my ever restless and curious mind I decided to explore the big bad world, and for two years travelled throughout Europe, Asia and Africa, experiencing different lifestyles. I returned to England and my attention became more and more centred on yoga and its utility for all aspects of life. I came to India, where my guru, Swami Satyananda, found me and initiated me into sannyasa. My outlook on life has now turned through 180 degrees. I now believe that the impossible is impossibly possible and that the possible is possible anyway. I urge all people to start living, start experiencing, start knowing the Truth. Do yoga."

The Philosophy of Tantra

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

For aspirants of yoga it is necessary they acquaint themselves with the philosophy of tantra. For many years tantra was misinterpreted, and even now both in the West and the East, tantra is thought of as magic and indulgence, and not as the science of developing self-awareness. There is no doubt that tantra accepts everything and is not a puritanical philosophy, but at the same time we must understand that it is a very important science affecting the entire range of human consciousness. It is the path by which man can transcend his mundane consciousness.

Tantra is prehistoric. It evolved with the advent of man. It evolved before the crystallization of any civilization; much before the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians or vedic civilization, tantra existed in the form of a law. Tantra is enquiry. It is an effort to discover logic behind events that have no apparent logic. It is a search into supernormal and supernatural phenomena that take place from time to time. This enquiry is not peculiar to civilized man. Even in the most primitive societies such inquisitiveness is present. In every society, from time to time you come across people who are endowed with special powers such as clairvoyance, telepathy, premonition or precognition. At first it was believed that these powers had to do with spirits, but later it was realized that it was the expression of an inherent human faculty. The truth and knowledge being expressed was within. When this realization dawned, people began to search for the method to develop these extrasensory abilities. Different methods were experimented with. Some practised penance, some used drugs; religious and non-religious practices and different yogas came about. They are called *sadhanas*, practices. Practices for what? Practices for liberating energy.

The etymology of the word tantra is significant. It is a Sanskrit word embracing two ideas and two roots. *Tan* means expansion and *tra* means liberation. This indicates that tantra is a science which deals with expansion and liberation. Expansion represents expansion of consciousness and liberation represents liberation of energy.

The human mind moves within a confined boundary and it has a limit of experience and cognition. However, it is possible to extend the area of human experience and take the consciousness beyond sensory limits. The normal mind depends on the senses for cognition and perception, and is therefore restricted by the capacity of the senses. This means our perceptions are conditioned; they are not absolute. In order to break the limitations

and conditions, we need a method whereby the mind can be expanded beyond its normal frontiers. What is intuition, clairvoyance or premonition? What is inner experience? They are products of an expanded mind. If you are not able to expand your consciousness, you cannot have these experiences.

Now, let us consider the word liberation. Do not think of it in the religious sense; tantra does not mean emancipation or salvation. It means liberation of *shakti*, energy. This liberation of energy is a fantastic concept. It is not psychic, abstract or philosophical.



राष्ट्रीय योग सम्मेलन रायपुर
दि. ६ से १० नवम्बर १९७६
संचालन-परमहंस स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

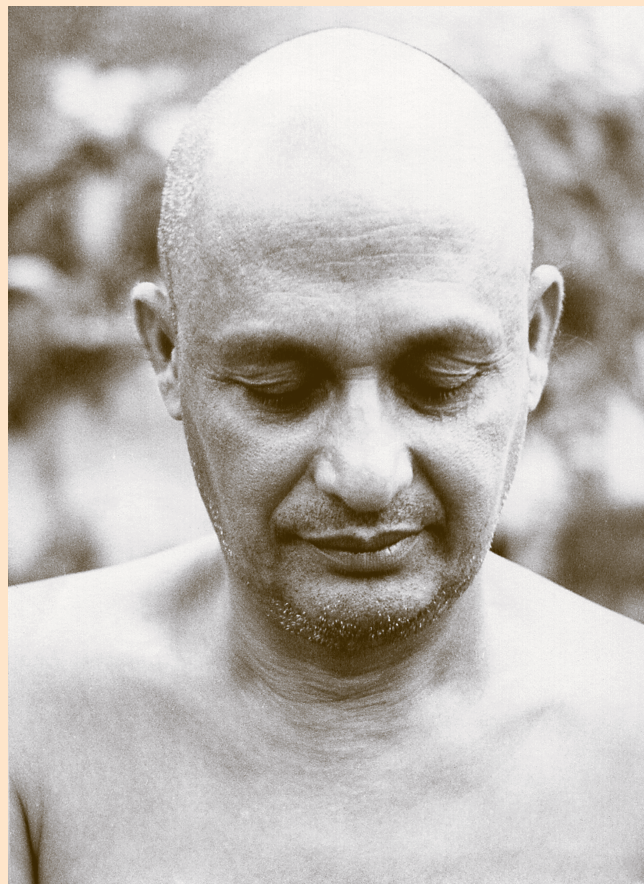
Energy is inherent in matter. Physics describes liberation of energy from matter. It is a subtle process taking place in all matter. In tantra, by certain techniques one liberates the shakti from the material base at the root of spine. With the expansion of mind, an awakening takes place in this matter, which is like a small gland. That awakened energy moves towards the higher centre. It moves through the central canal in the spinal column called sushumna, and ultimately invigorates, energizes and revitalizes the brain centres. Thus tantra is a system of techniques for expansion of consciousness and, consequently, liberation of shakti.

What are the techniques of tantra? The most important tool used in tantra is mantra. Throughout the tantric texts, mantra is said to be essential for the awakening of consciousness. Mantra is a sound or vibration. Just as ripples and waves are created when you throw a pebble into a lake, in the same way a mantra creates resonant waves in the realm of consciousness. The resonance travels from the brain up and down the spinal column a number of times. In the course of time the resonating waves of the mantra alter the consciousness. Mantra is a very effective tool for evolving individual consciousness, and what is most significant is that the awakening, or the influence created by the mantra in the field of consciousness is very mild and benign.

In addition to mantra, another powerful tool in tantra is yantra. Yantras are particular geometrical figures which are a combination of a point, a line and a circle. They represent the deep-rooted archetypes of an individual. All of man's experiences are stored in geometrical forms in the consciousness, and are represented by yantras. Every sound we hear, every form we see, every bit of knowledge that we gain and everything the brain registers, directly or indirectly, is transported to the deeper realms of the mind, but not exactly in the same way that the senses receive them. They are transformed into particular symbols or certain languages which are known as archetypes or samskaras. Every experience is in seed form in your unconscious mind. Disease is there, knowledge is there, pain, suffering and

happiness are there. There is no experience which is not there, but the peculiarity of nature is that they are in a symbolic state. Their explosion is the aim of the science of tantra. It is easy to say, "Empty yourself," but if you empty your conscious mind, that is not emptying the consciousness. If you create a vacuum in your conscious mind, you are sacrificing the entire consciousness. You cannot empty yourself until all the symbols are expressed, and to do this you must practise concentration on yantra.

The third important aspect of tantra is mandala. Mandala is a pictorial concept. If you concentrate on a symbol or on me, you



are concentrating on a mandala. It is very important for the mind to array itself in a particular form. Mandala crystallizes whereas yantra eliminates. The whole mind is emptied of samskaras through yantra and then is filled up with the consciousness of mandala. Therefore, mantra, yantra and mandala are the three tools that constitute the practical system of tantra.

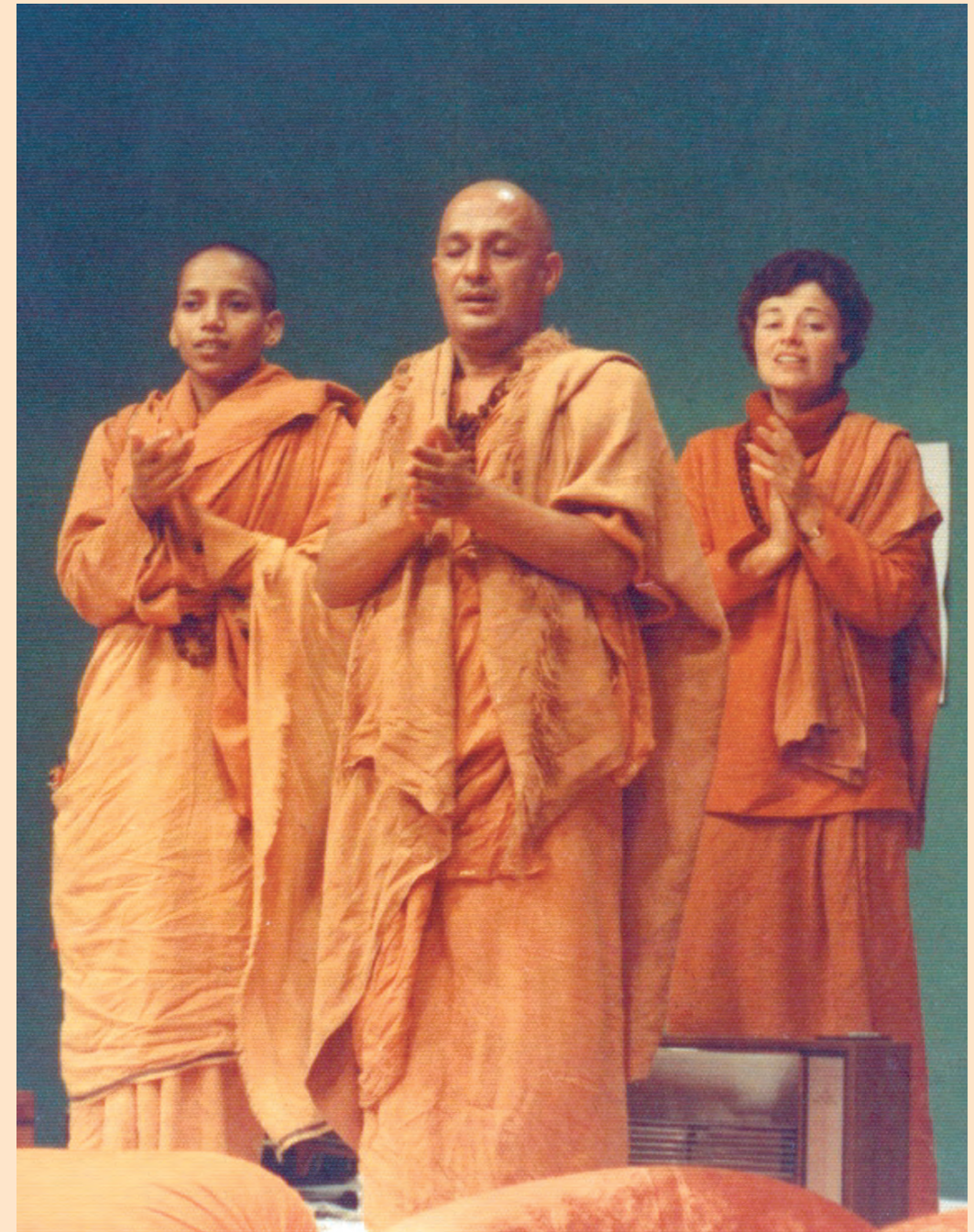
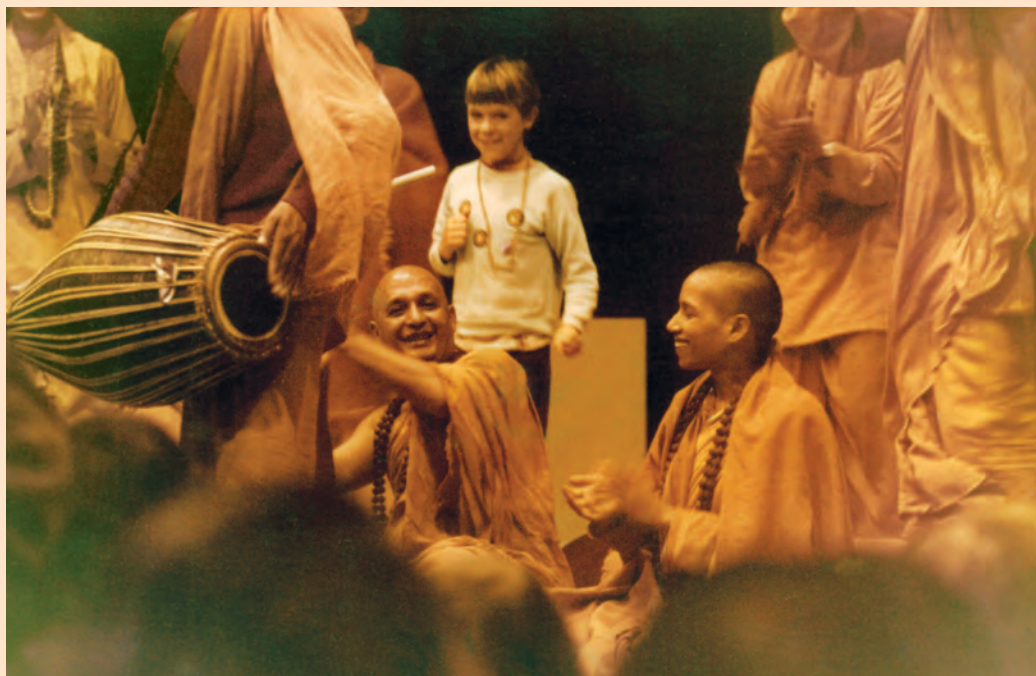
This is certainly not all there is to tantra; it is a vast subject of which yoga is an offshoot. Yoga is not different from tantra. The practices of hatha yoga, kriya yoga, mantra yoga, are clearly explained in tantra.

There is another important thing that must be remembered – whatever practices you perform must have a positive effect on the somatic and psychic systems. Your practices must look after the welfare of both the body and mind, because you are not only the body, not only the mind, not only the individual; you are a society and a community, you are a totality. You must integrate with all the realities that are around you, whether materialistic or sensual. You cannot isolate yourself nor can you bifurcate your personality. Your yoga practices or tantric practices must be in consonance with the realities that are around you. If you are a trader, they should make you a better trader. If you are a housewife, they should make you a better housewife. In tantra, you accept your life as a stepping stone to your spiritual progress.

So this is the profound vision of tantra, and the people who are practising and teaching yoga should inculcate this spirit, because the coming generations will not talk about the physical aspects of yoga. Change has already taken place. People have started understanding the realities behind the individual, the individual behind the individual. For many centuries we lived on the material plane of the body. Now we are talking about the mind, we are talking about the super mind. A scientist in the laboratory releases energy from the captivity of matter. In the same way, a yogi or a tantric must release the energy or the consciousness from the captivity of matter. That is the purpose of yoga as well as tantra. ॐ

Glimpses of World Yoga Convention, 1976







February

Construction continued to provide accommodation for the increasing numbers of swamis and students at BSY.

Swami Satyananda went to Kathmandu, invited by the Indian embassy, and gave a speech on yoga during a special meeting held there on 23rd and 24th.

July

Sri Swamiji and Swami Amritananda presided over the Guru Poornima celebration at Mangrove Mountain, Australia. Swami Niranjanananda, who had been touring Australia and New Zealand, returned to India with Sri Swamiji.

August

Sri Swamiji inaugurated the Kolkata ashram, and Swami Niranjan stayed there to help establish it.

September

Sri Swamiji went to Zinal, Switzerland, to address a conference organized by the European Union of National Federations of Yoga.

October

The National Yoga Convention was held in

Sambalpur. It was inaugurated by Sri Bhagavat Dayal Sharma, Governor of Orissa, and presided over by Sri Swamiji.

November

A group of 70 Australians came to participate in a special Kriya Yoga course.

December

Sri Swamiji conducted seminars in Colombia.



The day I caught up with my friend again, the monsoon broke. After months of a blistering sun and dry winds, dark clouds had gathered in the sky, buffeted by the strong

south-westerlies. And then the sky burst open! Ah, what a moment. Everyone – with Swami Niranjan in the lead – rushed into the courtyard and the lawns to be washed down by this first rain just like the trees that seemed to delight in being restored to juvenile greenness.

“Whenever it rains we say that Sri Swamiji is blessing us,” I shared. “For wherever Sri Swamiji went, he took the rain with him; sometimes a few drops would wet the cheeks of unsuspecting aspirants and at other times huge showers would cascade down.”

“1977 was a significant year in many ways,” I continued my sketch of the years. “Australia became, you might say, the toast of the times. The ashram at Mangrove Mountain was expanding



and drawing people at a breathless pace. Swami Niranjan was also there at this time. When Sri Swamiji visited and presided over the Guru Poornima celebrations at Mangrove this year, the waves just surged and surged. More than 700 people participated in the event, several received mantra initiation and a select few were initiated into poorna sannyasa. Yoga had truly reached the hearts of the Australian people.”

Sri Swamiji made four journeys overseas during this year and the yoga movement reached firm footing in Europe, Australia and South America.

A significant event was the conference of yoga teachers held at Zinal, Switzerland, organized by the European Union of National Federations of Yoga. Sri Swamiji explained the basis of tantra in penetrating talks to the gathering which consisted of yoga stalwarts such as Swami Satchidananda from New York, Swami Venkatesananda from Mauritius, Sri Desikachar from Chennai, and others.

Meanwhile, in BSY itself, accommodation was again stretched to the limit as more and more people travelled to Munger for instruction in advanced techniques such as kriya yoga. The twin magazines, *Yoga* in English and *Yoga Vidya* in Hindi, maintained a very high standard of information on research into yoga’s therapeutic benefits, as well as printing Sri Swamiji’s satsangs.

Despite the remarkable worldwide recognition, Sri Swamiji always maintained the strictest codes of sannyasa and inspired his sannyasins to do the same. Vairagya was ever his hallmark. An editorial in *Yoga Vidya* published during this time describes this facet of BSY aptly.

The song of sannyasa

“Ever since Sri Swamiji’s world tour of 1968, the eyes of yoga lovers all over the world are focused on Swami Satyananda. People have started to make a beeline for

Munger. Before BSY was established in 1964, Sri Swamiji used to live alone – a small ashram and Swamiji all by himself, that was all.

However, in no time at all, Sri Swamiji’s teachings of yoga have broken all walls of religion, politics and nation, spreading like wild fire beyond the oceans. Those who come are not just disciples and students, but a train of scientists, philosophers, doctors and researchers can be seen in Munger. Some arrive to take sannyasa, some to receive yoga training, others to learn kriya yoga . . . in large numbers people have started pouring in to acquire physical and mental health and have darshan of Sri Swamiji. The ashram is small and the number of visitors ever on the rise, so much so that today Sri Swamiji does not have a room of his own or the space to meet guests.

For sannyasins it is not a problem to live in any which way; they did not become sannyasins in search of comfort and pleasure. Despite having experienced the ease of modern living, many of them now sleep outdoors on a chowki or on the floor all twelve months of the year – whether it is monsoon or a cold winter night. Even visitors accustomed to luxurious living have to spread their bedding in the verandas, corridors and garage.

The ashram gives only two dhotis to sannyasins every year, female sannyasins receive two kurtas in addition. There is neither the facility nor the tradition to keep personal belongings. They brush their teeth with ash left over from cooking and do not use any cosmetics. These are the strictures of scriptures and the ashram follows them stringently. Sometimes onlookers’ eyes are filled with tears at the pitiful state of the sannyasins’ dhotis, which are often not just old, but patchworks created with several rags.



Ashram food, of course, is a subject of common conversation. There is a temporary stove in which wheat porridge is made every day. Within three or four minutes, we are all done with both lunch and dinner. An individual does not live on food alone, bread is not the goal of life; the source of energy is – work, and the source of work is – the goal. The sannyasins of BSY have a goal, work, as well as faith – what else do they need!



At the beginning, the toilets of the ashram were made keeping in mind the needs of a limited number of people – only fifteen or twenty. Now they are being used by 200 people, so every month the soak pit and chamber have to be opened up.

Mother Ganga arrives every year to wash Sri Swamiji's feet – she reaches not only up to the gate of the ashram but makes her way into the rooms as well. Once she did not leave for months! This happens every year. At that time, the sannyasins move up to the first floor and somehow manage to keep up the work.

Efforts are being made to expand the ashram, but the pace is slow. There are many reasons for this – the main



being Sri Swamiji's apathy. If he so wished, the work would be accomplished overnight. But Sri Swamiji says that a capable person should steer clear of selfish interests. 'Expansion of the ashram is not my duty; it is the duty of Munger, it is the duty of India; it is the duty of those who know,' he says.

With the help of a few devotees, two halls have been constructed which will be used as a research library. Sri Swamiji is not only a prolific reader, but also a prolific writer. He has gathered thousands of books – on psychology, philosophy, medicine, para-psychology, history, the Puranas, scriptures, and so on. Therefore, these two rooms have been added.

The printing press was started with a small treadle machine and today huge self-automated machines are busy re-producing the cosmic knowledge imparted by the rishis and munis at a tremendous speed. Yet we know that Sri Swamiji's tireless writing and the present capacity of the press cannot match. Either the press will have to expand or Sri Swamiji will have to stop writing. Right now two hundred manuscripts are lying unpublished. Besides, Sri Swamiji's disciples such as Dr Swamis Shankardevananda, Satyamurti, Vivekananda and others are continuously busy compiling yoga related research. We are also trying to establish contact with renowned researchers across the world who are exploring the science of yoga.

The rules in the ashram are strict, the food is simple and life is work-filled. The lazy and the indulgent have no allure to stay here because the ashram does not provide them with even the bare necessities of life.

What we witness in Sri Swamiji is complete detachment from aspirations, indifference to achievements and a peculiar joy in non-achievement – such is the person around whom the kalpa vriksha, wish-fulfilling tree, of yoga is growing taller and broader every day. Despite hurdles and obstructions, the cosmic river of yoga has been invoked down to earth through the efforts of a twentieth-century Bhagiratha.

Sri Swamiji says that he is an instrument, Bihar School of Yoga is an instrument, the sannyasins are instruments, and yoga is also an instrument. In this cosmic flow of creativity we are all mere instruments. In his distinctive style, he says:

'Ashrams are useless, a sadhu acquires disciples only due to bad karma, worldly illusions are the puppet play of the puppeteer. The doer is someone else, the thinker is someone

else, we have to only watch the dance of the act, and sometimes imitate the act.”

In fact, visitors to the ashram would sometimes be shocked at the complete lack of pomp or show around a man who had inspired thousands. H. K. Chavda recalls such an experience on his first visit to Munger.

A real avadhoota

“I was a newcomer to Munger and had been told that the city boasted a holy man. Being of a religious turn of mind, I was keen to see the saint and took myself to his ashram. As I entered, I saw a slightly built, youthful looking sannyasin, engaged in cleaning the drains and making a thorough job of it. I asked, ‘Maharaj, where could I see Paramahansa Satyanandaji?’ The sannyasin, with a broad smile, said, ‘You are speaking to him. Come, would you like to have a look at our school of yoga?’ I had expected to see someone of venerable age, solemn faced, and surrounded by devotees. But my disappointment was only temporary. Soon I realized that I was in the presence of a radiant personality, full of wisdom but light of heart, soft-spoken and putting one and all completely at ease.

The above incident illustrates the paradox that Sri Swamiji is. Although an adept in all branches of traditional yoga, he is far from a traditional yogi. A keen student of western psychology, he wants to apply yoga techniques universally for the ills of the world. Until now, because of its long tradition of secrecy, authentic yoga flourished in isolation. Sri Swamiji wants to do away with this secrecy and make the infinite riches of yoga available to all. He believes that yoga has very little to do with religion, it is just a way of life.

In one of his speeches on the role of a true guru he said, ‘Such a guru is a real avadhoota. He is a child with children, man with men, woman with women, simpleton with simpletons.’ This description applies so well to Sri Swamiji himself. Verily, he is a real avadhoota.”

Sri Swamiji’s methods of teaching were unique. He did not preach mere theory, but always led by example. Swami Yogashakti, one of his earliest disciples who was instrumental in

establishing yoga in Colombia, recalls an incident through which Sri Swamiji explained the role of guru.

Guru leela

“Most disciples regard guru seva or service to the guru as an important part of their sadhana, but few understand this service in its correct perspective or are actually aware of how selflessly the guru is constantly serving humanity.



One morning we were standing near a mango tree when we saw a bird half dead as a result of being clawed by other birds, but still struggling hard. We brought water and were trying to get it to swallow some when Sri Swamiji, who had been watching from behind, joined us. He gave the bird a drink and then asked

us to bring an old cage which had been lying in the storeroom. We cleaned the cage and Sri Swamiji gently placed the bird in it and carried it to his room. Daily he bathed the bird, gave it food and water, and kept it with him whenever he sat outside in the sun. Within a few days the bird became very friendly and Sri Swamiji often opened the cage, letting it roam about in his room. One day Sri Swamiji was sitting in the sun, gazing at the bird with great affection. Suddenly he opened the cage, took the bird out and threw it into the sky. We were all surprised to see the bird fly away and wondered why Sri Swamiji had set the bird free after serving it with so much love.

Then Swamiji explained: ‘My aim is always to give help when it is actually needed, but the person is free to honour my help or not. Those who have some regard for my service will help in my mission, otherwise they can live in their own way. I serve all alike and take it as my duty. Those who understand will attain.’

On yet another occasion, learning came at the printing press when the new automatic composing machines had been freshly installed. One sannyasin was working on the monotype machine and was rather pleased with himself for being able to handle this capable new device.

One day Sri Swamiji was on a round of the graphics department, and asked the swami, “How many pages are you able to compose?” That disciple thought that if he exaggerated the number a little Sri Swamiji would be pleased with his talents. He said, “Swamiji I am not yet very proficient, but I can compose twelve-fifteen pages.” The familiar guru smile spread over Sri Swamiji’s face and in a serious tone of voice he said, “Try to compose six pages. You will have to work a little harder, but the work will be more precise, there will be greater perfection and fewer mistakes. A sannyasin should not worship quantity but quality.”

The swami started trying to practise this teaching. For several days he was unable to compose even six pages a day. But slowly, with practice and dedication, the quantity, as well as the quality, started going up.

Expansion of Consciousness through Kriya Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

In the science of tantra, kriya yoga is one of the ways used for awakening the spiritual consciousness. Traditionally, this system was transmitted only from guru to disciple, but now the time has come for it to be more widely known. Actually, in many ancient traditions throughout the world, there were mystic practices which were similar to kriya yoga and they were communicated in the same way.

The tantric system is definitely most suitable for the modern age, and I consider the practices of kriya yoga to be among the best forms of tantric meditation. Having been a keen student of all the systems of meditation, I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing higher than kriya yoga. It is a fantastic combination of hatha yoga, raja yoga, mudras and bandhas that takes care of each and every sphere of existence in the body and mind. Those people who have been meditating to forget themselves may not find this system very inspiring. Those who become a zero in meditation will say, "What is kriya yoga?" or "I'm not interested."

While practising kriya yoga two distinct things are experienced: the scope of the objective universe and the awakening of inner awareness. Kriya yoga does not suppress any form of experience or knowledge. For example, if during the practice you are looking at a clock, without trying to withdraw the mind, you will see the clock, but at the same time you won't see it. This is a curious experience. If you hear a sound from outside while practising kriya yoga, you will not have to withdraw the mind from the sound. The sound is there, let it be. The mind will expand to this



sound until suddenly the sound changes its dimension. No experiences concerning the senses, emotions, memory or mind are suspended. You know, see, hear, taste, smell, understand, feel and remember everything, but still you are somewhere else. The experience takes place from a

different realm. When inner awareness begins to awaken, the mind expands in both directions at the same time, internal and external.

The word *kriya* means movement. In this sense it represents the internal movement of consciousness, and its goal is the evolution of this consciousness. Consciousness is inherent in every living being. It is the soul and spirit of every speck of existence, and within every speck of existence there is unseen motion going on. Everything is evolving, progressing and changing every second. The whole of existence is inexorably moving towards one fulfilment and this movement is called evolution. The word *kriya* symbolizes this movement.

This first process of evolution is production of energy from matter. During the course of millions of years that we human beings have existed on this planet, we have liberated our consciousness considerably from the gross existence of instinct, and we have become more aware of existence in relation to time and space. During the previous period when we were still living on the instinctive plane, we were responsive to sensory stimuli, we were able to enjoy and express suffering, as we see in the animal kingdom now. However, we have definitely passed through that phase of existence – not completely, perhaps half or a little more of our existence is still on the instinctive plane. However, with the advent of humanity we have developed a higher consciousness, a realization of the self. We are not just conscious of our environment, we are aware of ourselves. Thus we have greater knowledge and greater control over our awareness. I know that I am, but I also know that I know I am. This is self-awareness, and this is evolution.

To have come to this point of evolution has taken millions of years. If we allow nature to take its own course, it may

take many more millions of years for us to evolve fully, and maybe before that this planet will come to an end. In order to accelerate this inner motion of evolution in us, tantra has formulated many practices, one of which is the cosmic motion of kriya yoga. Through this we not only become aware of the knowledge of our own existence, but also of the real nature of this whole existence.

Who am I? This is the question, and of course there is an answer, but that answer is not very clear, because it can only be derived from self-experience and most people do not have that experience. Fortunately, to help us evolve the mind to that height where we can experience our real nature effectively, the practices of kriya yoga exist.

Kriya yoga is a self-contained system of practices from tantra, but unless you have perfectly mastered the practices of hatha yoga, you will not be able to practise kriya yoga successfully. Therefore, you must practise the six cleansing techniques of hatha yoga, *shatkarmas*, to purify the whole physical structure. Then kriya yoga becomes easy. Kriya yoga will lead to an awakening of the kundalini in mooladhara chakra, but this will only take place according to the purification of the body. If the energy channels are purified, then the awakening of kundalini becomes a divine experience.

The first practice of kriya yoga is vipareeta karani mudra. The position itself is the same as in hatha yoga, but in addition the consciousness changes the flow of energy. The second kriya is the discovery of the chakras and is known as *chakra anusandhana*. In this, one tries to discover and learn the right location of the chakras in the body. The third practice is where real kriya yoga begins. It is known as *nada sanchalana*, conducting the subtle sound vibration. The fourth kriya yoga practice is pawan sanchalana, and so on. Of all the kriya practices,



maha mudra and maha bheda mudra are the two most important. There are many subsidiary practices which are also important. One is vajroli mudra, contraction of the vajra nadi which controls the urinary and sexual complex. You must also perfect *nasikagra drishti*, nosetip

gazing. Those who concentrate on the tip of the nose for a specific time develop the ability to smell psychic fragrances. Shambhavi mudra or *bhrumadhya drishti* is gazing at the eyebrow centre. Then there is *akashi mudra*, consciousness of inner space, and *unmani mudra*, the



meditative attitude. You also have to know jalandhara bandha, uddiyana bandha, khechari mudra and naumukhi mudra. Then you awaken the trident of Shiva in sushumna. This trident is not made of copper. It is made of the most subtle, divine and heavenly elements, and its sharp prongs pierce bindu at the top back of the head.

There are twenty-seven practices in kriya yoga, but fourteen are enough. After the seventh practice we stop external pranayama and do internal pranayama. Retention, inhalation and exhalation are done on a different plane altogether. After the tenth practice, the eyes are closed, the body is made immobile; only the individual self becomes the

subject matter of awareness. The mind is brought down to a point, awareness of the shivalingam is awakened and the astral body is brought in front of the mind. When you are able to handle the mind, then you are able to handle anything in life. Those who take up kriya yoga, but cannot practise all fourteen kriyas, must at least do maha mudra and maha bheda mudra. However, those who are really keen to develop the inner process must take up the full practice of kriya yoga.

Kriya yoga is one of the most effective methods for coming closer to inner awareness. According to the philosophy of tantra, everybody has a right to higher unfoldment. Therefore, your personal status in life, whether you are male or female, brahmachari, householder or sannyasin matters little. Kriya yoga is open to all.

In kriya yoga the aspirant does not enter into meditation; he experiences meditation. The self is already tranquil. The self is always in eternal equipoise. Samadhi is not an achievement; it is the awareness already existing in us. Through the practice of kriya yoga an awakening takes place in mooladhara, and the mind suddenly enters the state of samadhi. I do not use the word 'trance', samadhi is absolute equilibrium. I have never considered meditation to be absolutely internal awareness. The state of meditation, the state of samadhi includes all dimensions of awareness, external as well as internal, and these should be experienced simultaneously. During the practice you are transcending external experience, but finally you have to stretch your mind to the external consciousness. In samadhi, the mind, the self, the spirit become homogeneous, and for that spirit, for that consciousness which is samadhi, both internal and external awareness are the same. Kriya yoga meditation is a total experience, which means experience of inner and outer life at the same time. The self, the spirit or the consciousness becomes a witness of all states of the mind and all states of awareness. ॐ

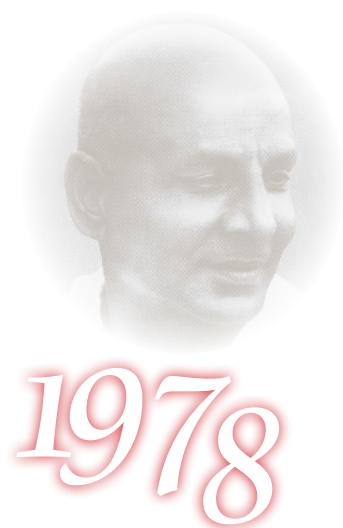
1977



Ganga Darshan Yogashram

2007





January

Swami Satyananda travelled to Greece and conducted a seminar in Athens, arranged by Swami Sivamurti. He travelled on to Barcelona where he conducted a seminar arranged by Swami Santaram. On his return to India he inaugurated the Sivananda Kutir Yogashram near BSY.

February–March

Sri Swamiji inaugurated a one-week therapy program for diabetes at Sambalpur. He then travelled to Raigarh, Kolkata, Pune and Mumbai. Dr. Swami Vivekananda conducted seminars organized by BSY in South India with great success. Swamis Satchidananda, Gorakhnath and Dr. Swami Vivekananda from BSY then toured throughout India, conducting yoga seminars arranged by BSY, Munger.

May

Swami Atmananda from the Singapore branch ashram began a tour of South-East Asia.

June

Swami Niranjanananda conducted a seminar in Rishra.

July

A one-month seminar began for European yoga teachers at BSY. Swami Satchidananda and Dr. Swami Vivekananda conducted programs in Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Guru Poornima marked the opening of a new ashram, Ganga Darshan, in Munger. Thousands of people came to participate in the special occasion. Sri Swamiji conducted the Pratishtha ceremony.

September–October

Sri Swamiji travelled to Australia to preside over the World Yoga Convention sponsored by Satyananda Ashram, Australia. The international printing and distribution of *Yoga* magazine was taken over by the Australian ashram.

November

Sri Swamiji travelled to Colombia and conducted a Kriya Yoga course there. The first Spanish editions of *Yoga* magazine were begun to be published on modern offset equipment.

The National Yoga Convention was held in Dhanbad.

December

Dr. Swami Vivekananda from BSY travelled to Colombia.

Sri Swamiji inaugurated the All-India Yoga Convention at Thane.

Large groups of yoga practitioners from Australia, Spain and South America came to Munger for a special Kriya Yoga course.





On the next occasion of our encounter, Navaratri sadhana, the nine-day worship invoking the Cosmic Mother, was being observed in the ashram. Autumn had crept up on us. The sun was mellow on its southward journey, the air soft, the smoke from the kitchen chimney lingered a trifle longer in its curls, autumnal nostalgia was mingled with the unmistakable resonance of the presence of the Cosmic Creatrix, intensified by the chanting of the mantras and the havans. My eager interrogator and I swept clear the cobblestone path of the leaves let fall by the season, walking downhill to the Main Gate. And I waited for the inevitable question.

“I’ve heard that King Karna who ruled from here also used to propitiate the Goddess. So tell me when did the

move from the small BSY ashram to this sprawling complex come about?”

Rattling my memory, I continued, “Through the seventies, the demand on the ashram was ever on the rise. Many conventions were now being held in Munger, and in order to accommodate the growing number of aspirants who sought admittance, it was necessary to purchase a larger property. Therefore in 1976, after much consideration, it was decided to build a new ashram on the hill overlooking Sivanandashram. Later the legal transactions were finalized and the ancient site of Karna Chaura was handed over to BSY in 1978. Sri Swamiji renamed the place Ganga Darshan.”

This was a turning point in the history of BSY. The legendary King Karna of the Mahabharata had distributed wealth in the

form of gold from this very spot. Among the ancient places of spiritual power found on earth, this must surely be the most generous. Swami Satyananda was strongly attracted to the lonely hill and had many spiritual experiences there; now once again wealth is flowing from the spiritual king’s storehouse. The vision that crafted Ganga Darshan was explained by Sri Swamiji in a satsang.

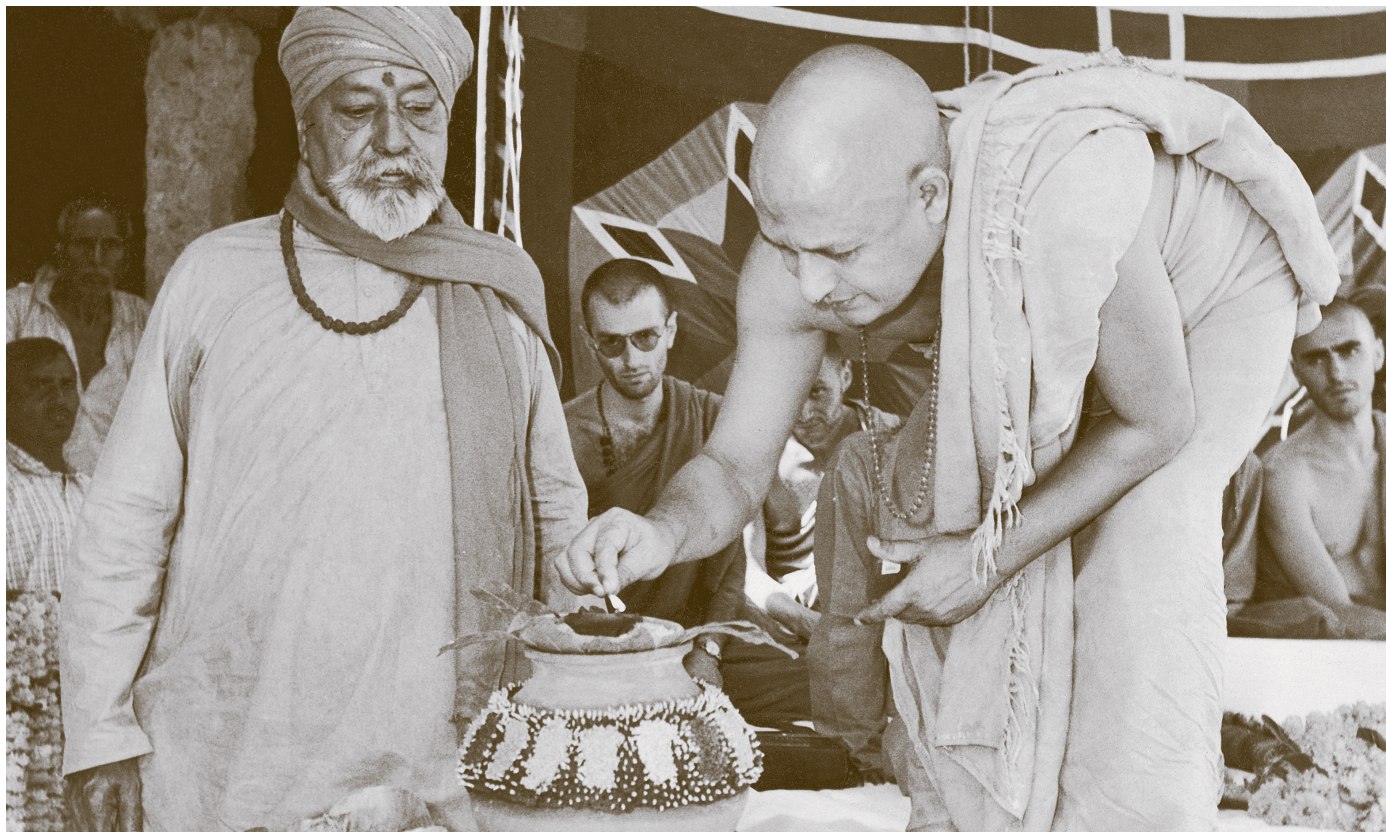
A vision manifests

“Munger is 108 miles east of Patna, 300 miles west of Kolkata, on the banks of the Ganga where it flows like a mala, garland. Munger was once the capital of Maharaja Karna, the great warrior-hero famous for his generosity and charity in the Mahabharata. This eldest son of Kunti, mother of the Pandavas, was also a tantric mahayogi. He worshipped Chandi, the fierce form of the Cosmic Mother who slew the demon Mahishasura. Thus the ishta devi of Munger is Chandi.”

Munger acquired its name from Rishi Mudgala who had an ashram here. Mudgala was one of the two disciples of Lord Buddha, the other was Sariputta. Mudgala came to be known as Mudgalagiri; shortly after it became Mudgiri and finally the English called it Monghyr. Now Monghyr has changed to Munger. It was the capital of the kingdom of Anga, which was gifted to Karna by his friend Duryodhana. Here Karna had a palace which was known as Karna Chaura.

In 1967, I had my eye on this site and approached many people for a loan because I was very keen to acquire the property. Finally, in 1976, I acquired it. Today, that precious hillock belongs to BSY. However, the actual foundation and roots of BSY are at the foot of the hill in a small ashram known as Bihar School of Yoga where I first came in 1964.

‘Ganga Darshan’ has two meanings. One is vision of Ganga and the other is vision of prana shakti or pingala nadi. Ganga represents pingala, Yamuna represents ida, Saraswati represents sushumna, and for yoga, control of pingala nadi, vision or knowledge of pingala nadi is very essential. I will tell you a small story. One day when Hanumanji got up from his sleep, he felt very hungry. He did not see anything to eat, but saw the sun, Balaravi. So he swallowed



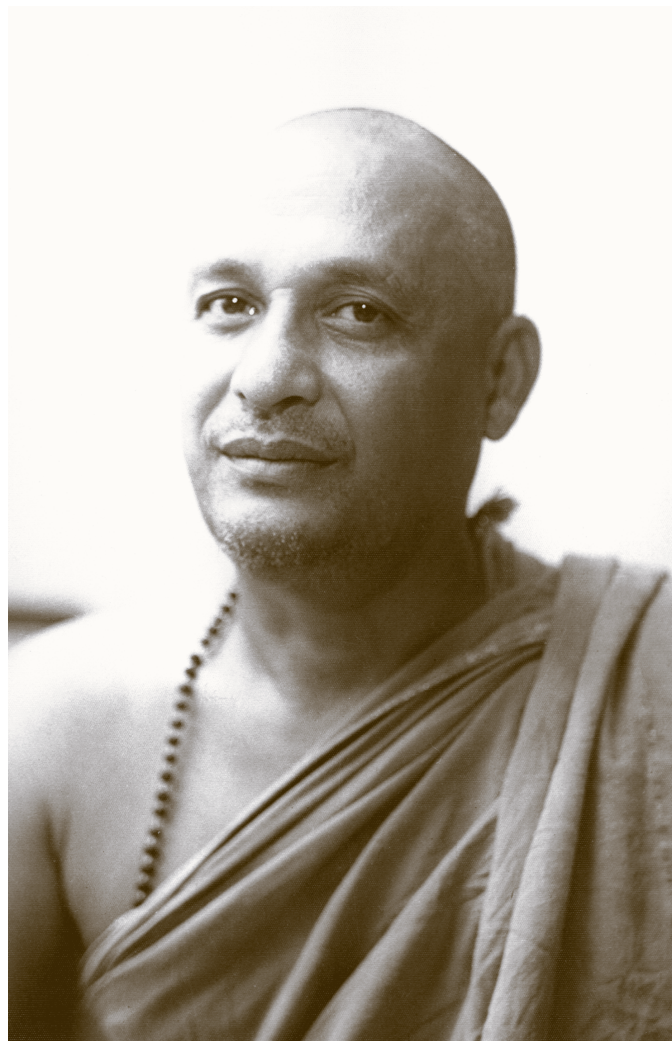
up the sun, and at once, the three worlds became dark. What this means is that Hanuman stopped the flow of his prana completely. To stop pingala nadi completely is to have control over prana, and a yogi must have control over prana. If you do not have control over prana, you cannot have control over the elements or over the life process. So I named that ashram Ganga Darshan with these two ideas in mind, and it grew by itself.

I never aspired for an ashram, it is not my nature. I am not an ambitious person. As a sannyasin my ambitions are just two rotis, two dhotis, chillum, channa, chimta. I wanted to be alone, by myself – no ashram, no disciples! I quietly went to Munger and stayed there for over eight or nine years off and on. During my visits I had many visions, intuitions and revelations.

Yoga is not my sampradaya, tradition. My sampradaya is Vedanta. I belong to the tradition of Sringeri – that is my personal sannyasa. I am a sannyasin from the Dashnami order known as Saraswati, so my philosophy is Vedanta, not yoga. Of course I know yoga; as a sannyasin I ought to, but it is not necessary for a sannyasin to practise yoga. What for? A sannyasin has no tension, no problems, no insomnia, no high blood pressure, no anxiety, no indigestion – when you only eat half a roti and do not take any ghee, how can you get indigestion? I did not practise yoga in that way, but I know a lot about it and have read a lot of books on the subject.

In Munger things began to happen by themselves and I was surprised. I thought, 'I lived in Rishikesh for twelve years and I have been here only a few months. What is happening to me?' For nights upon nights with eyes wide open I would see things, hear voices, feel things. In 1963 when I was not even preaching I already knew what is happening today. At that time it just came to my mind, 'Yoga is the culture of tomorrow.' This is my slogan, which I began to use in 1963 after seeing those pictures and visions. So I stayed in Munger, had Sri Kedarnath Goenka give a little plot of land and sat down quietly. It was 19th January 1964, the day of Basant Panchami.

From that day till today, I do not know what has happened! Not a day do I get rest; not a day can I think of anything



other than yoga. A number of times I have thought, 'Get out somewhere in seclusion and don't come out for three to six months!' Of course not now, but in-between I used to think like that. Many times I closed my school for one month. Even now I do it, but I get the maximum number of students when I declare the school closed. Batch after batch of teachers and sannyasins are prepared in that little school. Now I have given up resisting because I've begun to think, 'I am not doing it.

Things are happening without my personal participation.' Even if I do participate things will happen, because yoga has to become the mother of world cultures.

Even BSY is not my creation or imagination. I had gone to Rameshwaram with my guru, Swami Sivananda, in the 1950s. Our team of sannyasins had worked very hard to prepare for the All India program and at the conclusion of the events, Swamiji had told us to go to Rameshwaram temple and have darshan of the shivalingam. I was around twenty-seven years old then. When I bowed before the shivalingam at Rameshwaram, I had a vision of an area with buildings beside a river on a hillock. I also had the deep feeling that the vision was somehow related to me, but I could not understand it and eventually this experience left my mind.

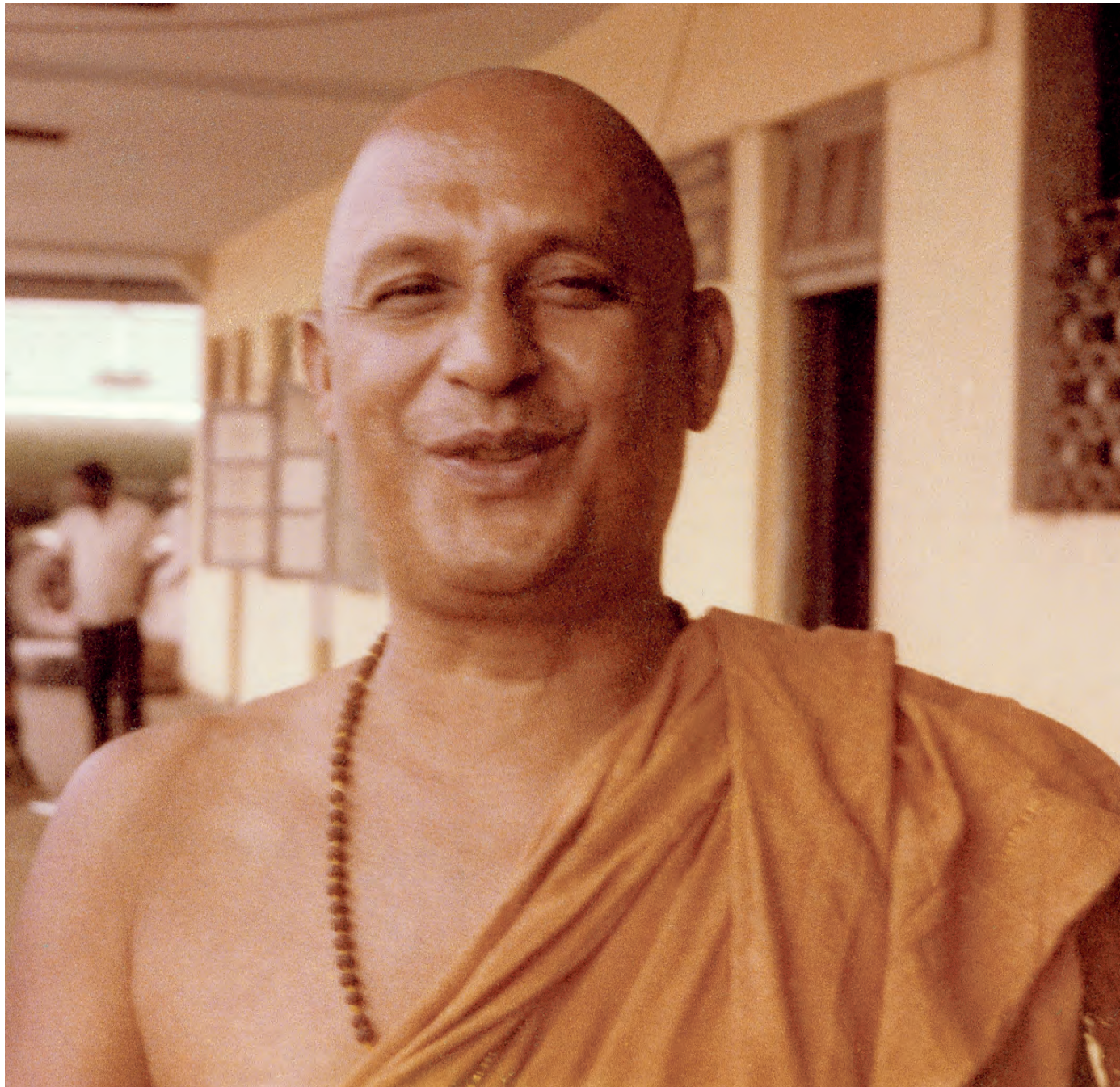
Much later in 1982, when Ganga Darshan was being constructed and the design was finalized, it suddenly flashed before me that I had seen this site, the building, the hillock and the river in my vision at Rameshwaram. Ganga Darshan is the manifestation of that vision. Even the details of the vision have become clear to me, and therefore I know that I am not the doer, that things are being done through me."

To transform the dilapidated palace of Karna into the seven-storey Ganga Darshan took a massive effort. The swamis recall what it was like.

A spiritual monument takes shape

"What had once been an area of attraction for the whole district had fallen into such neglect that only brambles and thorns remained as witnesses to its former glory. The estate which had once covered hectares of beautiful parks and gardens was now reduced to a rugged hill. And the old palace, where once kings and generals sported, had become a centre of corruption. In fact, nobody even dared to go there after 4 pm.

Some swamis shifted here, along with chowkies, chairs and bedding on 26 January 1978, Republic Day. On the first night the swamis spent at the new ashram site, they were too frightened to sleep. But Sri Swamiji said, "Just do kirtan, there is no need to be frightened." And they did such a powerful kirtan that all the



negative vibrations melted away. Everyone soon felt calm and quiet. From this experience we realized that kirtan, chanting of Om and mantras, does change the vibrations of the mind and heart, and frightens away all the negative elements from the atmosphere. But still we were somewhat afraid.

Sri Swamiji said that all the swamis and students had to sleep in different places, but no one dared to sleep at the main gate. By morning we found that we had all brought our chowkies together at one spot. After some days Sri Swamiji came to visit Ganga Darshan and he walked through all the broken-down buildings, rooms and halls. After that everybody felt at ease to sleep anywhere. At that time there was no electricity, but in a few days we got a temporary connection. There was no source or facilities for water on the hill either. So we had to go for water to a nearby well. For a bath we went to the pond, and for toilet we went outside in the fields with one mug of water. The water connection was very necessary for construction and gardening. After one month we got our first small pump. There was no telephone either. When we had to consult Sri Swamiji at the old ashram we went by bicycle. However, within a very short time we got a telephone connection.

We started cleaning the buildings and the surrounding land. Many repairs were made and doors and windows fixed on the old buildings. Many times we had to face foxes, vicious dogs, snakes and scorpions, but they never harmed us. Sri Swamiji always said not to kill anything because animals are not an enemy of man; only fear is the enemy of man. So we became free from fear of these things. We prepared some plots for vegetables and planted eggplant, cabbage, corn and peas. We also started planting trees – mango, lichi, jackfruit, bael, guava, ashoka and papaya.

Sri Swamiji would come to Ganga Darshan two or three times a day; in the early morning he would bring all the sannyasins with him. He would keep them busy in the garden clearing new plots or removing huge piles of bricks and rocks from one spot to another. After that there would be an enormous nashta and he would encourage everyone to eat as much as they liked.



The new ashram meant a large-scale plan, so we printed an appeal asking help from people in the form of donations of money, materials or work. At this time many people were starting to come for satsang with Sri Swamiji in the old building or the garden. They also enjoyed working with the swamis in the garden. We prepared many little straw kutirs in the midst of the garden and Sri Swamiji often spent mornings and evenings quietly sitting there, or giving satsang to whoever came. Three months later construction began.

First we needed an area for taking classes. At that time classes were conducted outside, sometimes in the garden or at the rifle range. So the first building to be constructed was the sadhana hall. The site selected for this was the ancient Karna Chaura platform. After that came the boundary wall, and then Sri Swamiji's kutir.

In July 1978, Sri Swamiji decided to celebrate Guru Purnima at Ganga Darshan. All the local people of Munger were invited. Guru Pooja was conducted in the half-finished sadhana hall, with swamis chanting from early morning. For three to four hours there was a constant stream of people flowing in and out to pay their respects and receive Sri Swamiji's blessings. This was the first time in hundreds of years that so many people had collected for a program at this place. Thousands attended the evening program and the whole hill was literally covered with people. They were even sitting in the branches of trees, on broken parapets and the roof of the old building. In the evening program, Sri Swamiji spoke about the history of Ganga Darshan and future plans. He said there would be sadhana halls, accommodation for students and patients, research centre and library, etc.

Although we had to face many difficulties and obstacles at that time, we never gave up because we realized that yoga had to arrive here. Sri Swamiji always used to say that if you want to be a saint or realized person you don't have to do sadhana or go to Gangotri, you just have to face the difficulties. We even received instruction from the local government officials to stop all construction, and not to dig more than six inches into the ground. Swamiji said at that time, 'I can move the ashram anywhere, but the people of Bihar should think about their future. Because if I remove the ashram not even one swami would come here ever again.' After two years the local people realized that all this was a misunderstanding. They started coming to Ganga Darshan for classes and construction was resumed.

The bulk of the construction began in 1980. The boundary wall, kutir, sadhana hall and motor room were finished. The old palatial bungalow, however, was crumbling rapidly. Half of the roof over the main halls had already fallen in and we were banned from climbing on to the roof to have darshan of the Ganga. This year also saw the foundation of the Well House and Yoga Arogya and a lot of earth-cutting to shape the hill and make level ground for construction and plantations.

Hunting for material and contractors, labour, management, marketing, stores and supervision began to play an increasingly

large part in our daily lives. The work of the construction department perhaps started here. Marketing became the most challenging job. Sannyasins looked all over the country for the best materials. They went to Patna, Pakur, Jamshedpur, Kota, Calcutta and Delhi; and even to the teak forests to purchase and load the trees for our doors and windows. Full-time labourers are difficult to find in Munger, as most of them are also cultivators. But even from the opposite bank of the Ganga they come here to work – in all seasons. Each morning they arrive at 8 am and work till 5 pm in the blazing sun.

At the foot of the hill a large well was blasted for pumping of water, drinking and gardening purposes. Nearby, a small two-storey house was built with eight rooms, two halls and verandas, to house the pump. This was followed by the construction of three large residential buildings. The first of this was Yoga Arogya with two floors and over sixty rooms. It was the first major construction. Next was the Kitchen Building. The third building was actually built to house the old BSY Press on the bottom floor with over thirty residential rooms for female sannyasins and visitors on the second floor. These buildings were all completed between 1980 and 1983.

On Guru Purnima, which was celebrated at Ganga Darshan in July 1982, Swamiji laid the foundation stone for the main seven-storey building at the top of the hill, where the dilapidated palatial bungalow had stood. Demolishing and dismantling what was left of it required an army of destruction labourers and months of work. A number of tractors were engaged to move the steel, timber and brickbats.

We all work day in and day out; no, it's not work but karma yoga. We work for the sake of working and not for its fruits. People often say that sannyasa is escapism. They should come and see Ganga Darshan – see the sannyasins working, experiencing the same problems as themselves. Solving those same problems in various ways but with one main difference – non-attachment. People are coming. They are arriving in droves from all points of the globe to construct or reconstruct their inner building."

Scientific Investigations into the Practices of Yoga

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The science of yoga is not a religion. It has the definite purpose of giving a scientific direction to human evolution. From the ocean of yogic knowledge, one practical and immediately beneficial system is hatha yoga. In ancient times we had two great gurus, Gorakhnath and Gheranda, who expounded the science of hatha yoga, which includes the system of postures known as asanas. The word asana should not be translated as exercises. *Asana* means bodily postures.

In the beginning people thought that asanas were like the exercises learned in the physical training system. Later on, scientific investigations carried on in India and elsewhere proved that the practice of yoga asanas has an influence on the nervous system, the endocrinal glands and their reaction on the emotional personality. Therefore, we had to change our concept of yoga asanas. Now we practise yoga asanas not to develop the physique, but in order to harmonize the body, purify and balance the nervous system and regulate the hormonal secretions, which have an immediate influence over our emotions such as anger, hatred, love, fear, anxiety and so forth. Recent scientific investigations in India, Poland, Russia, USA, France and Australia have proved beyond any doubt that yogic asanas are completely different from physical exercises. It has also been claimed and proven by scientists in the USA and Australia that the practice of asanas can alleviate some incurable diseases like high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma.

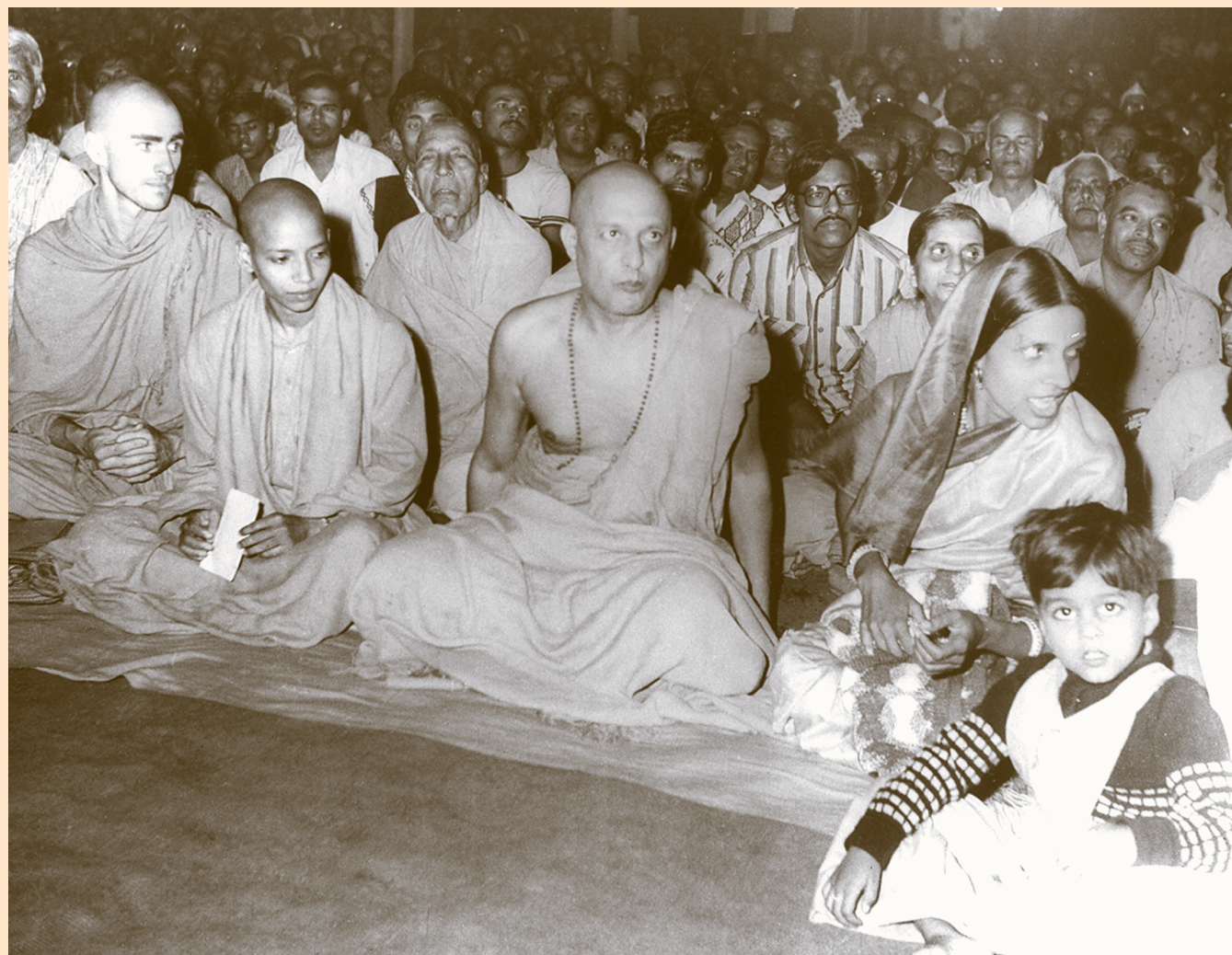
Now scientists are conducting research into the influence of yogic practices on the brain wave patterns. These beta, alpha, delta and theta waves control human



behaviour. Whether you are angry or pleased, full of compassion or anxious and afraid, you are under the influence of these waves. In one who is sleeping, delta waves are predominant. When relaxed and completely free of tension, alpha waves are intensified. The influence of alpha intensity in the brain immediately acts on the systolic and diastolic blood pressure. However, by creating particular waves you can influence the brain. Investigations have shown that patients suffering from hypertension

or high blood pressure could immediately lower it by intensifying the alpha waves.

Yoga practices enable us to control the behaviour of these brain wave patterns. There are simple methods in the yogic system to induce alpha waves. Scientific experiments have proved that the practice of asana, pranayama and concentration can produce an intensity of alpha waves, which will immediately bring down the blood pressure. This gives many people a concrete reason to start practising yoga.



In addition to brain wave therapy, medical experts have been talking about the scientific effects of yoga practices on the nervous system. The sympathetic, parasympathetic and central nervous systems control our sensory cortex. We are controlled by the nervous system. If it fails to carry or control the impulses, then mental and physical problems arise.

Scientists today have come to the conclusion that most of the diseases in the body have their origin in the mind via the emotions. An emotional situation causes a mental vibration, a mental wave, and through the body-mind relationship this influence is transferred to the body in the form of a disease like asthma, diabetes or insomnia. People who want to

reduce fat and have a beautiful body must remember that the metabolism in the body is controlled by the mind, which is influenced by the emotions. When you are in the grip of fear, the adrenal glands secrete adrenalin directly into the bloodstream. This immediately affects the coronary artery and therefore the heart.

In Bihar a research project was conducted at Patna Medical College in coordination with Bihar School of Yoga on the effect of asanas on coronary disease. It indicated that even in heart diseases such as myocardial infarction, angina and so forth, asanas have a positive influence. Of course, complicated yoga practices should not be used in certain coronary diseases, yet yogic practices will definitely bring about a positive transformation in the structure and functions of the coronary complex. In another research study in Bombay, it was concluded that high blood pressure caused by hypertension can be brought down by yoga nidra, without the help of medicine.

Similar data can be given about yogic research into other diseases and I can assure you that they have a positive and hopeful message for everyone who is suffering from physical as well as mental problems. It was found in Switzerland that yoga helps to remove addiction. All the addictions of the mind and senses, whatever they may be, can be removed with the help of yoga. Yoga brings about a transformation of the total being, a change of temperament, habits and outlook.

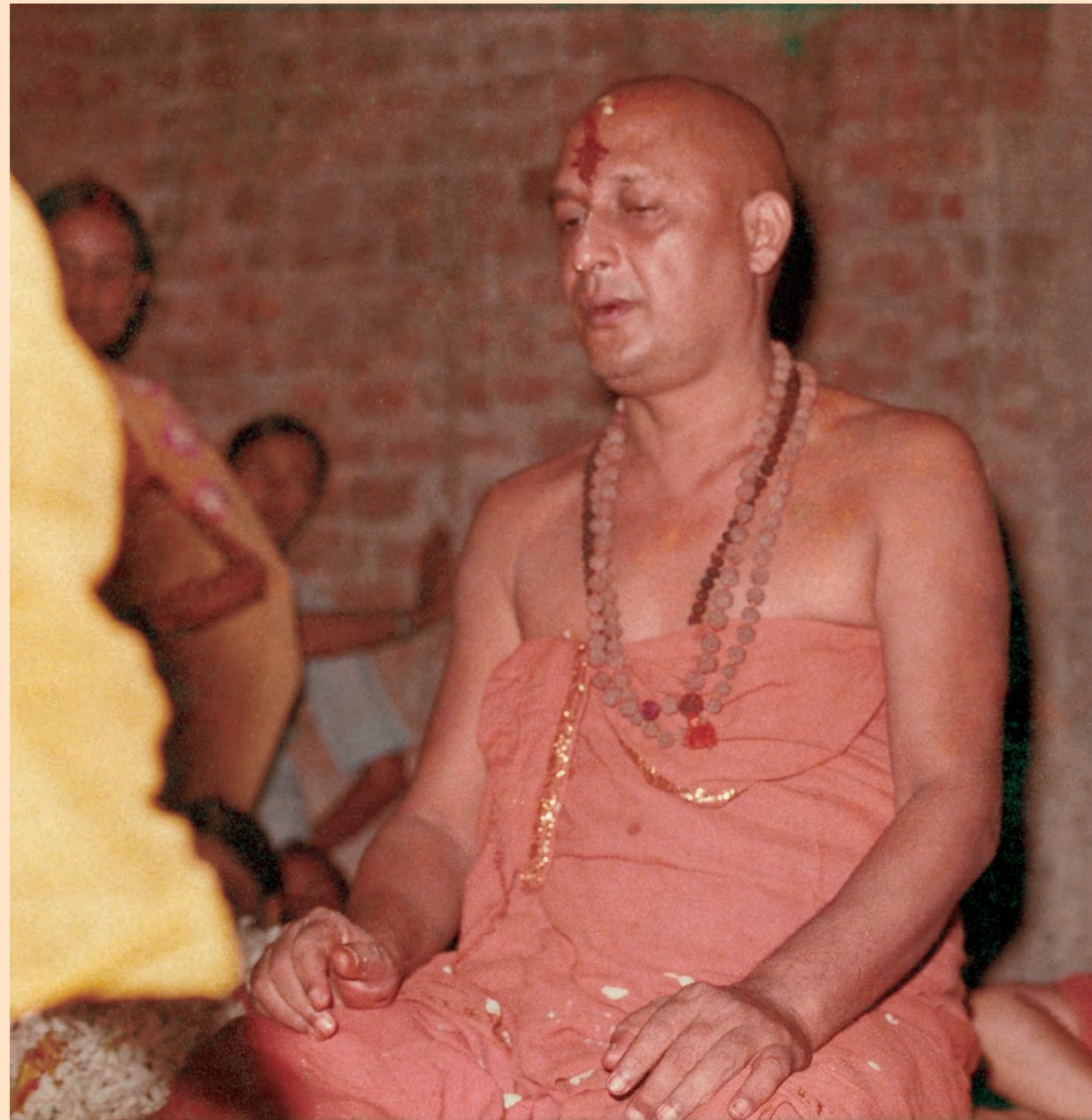
Therefore, yoga has an important place in the therapeutic system of this century. To give a very simple example, in the olden days Indian children used to be taught surya namaskara, pranayama and Gayatri mantra at the age of seven. However, as the time passed, the wise men of this country no longer understood the importance of these practices and so our children no longer learn them. Thus, due to ignorance and lack of interest, our cultural heritage is being lost. However, medical science has now come up with some amazing

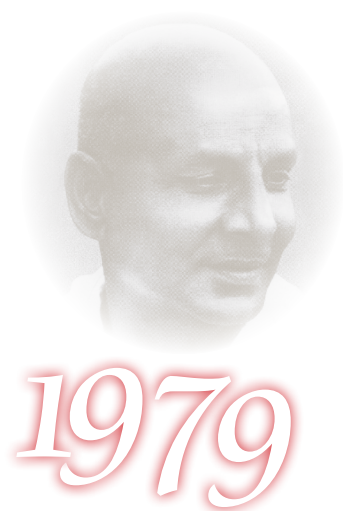
factual correlations and new interest in yoga is being revived. Therefore, yogasanas should never be considered as ordinary exercises. Yoga, which is based on scientific experiments, is an entirely different department from athletics and sport.

When defining yoga, we have to be very careful. Some people say that hatha yoga is the definition of yoga. Others say that meditation is yoga. For some people hatha yoga is more important and for others meditation, but the effect of both is the same on the human body and mind. What is achieved by meditation can also be achieved by hatha yoga and vice versa. Hatha yoga is not only physical in nature. The practices of asana and pranayama have immediate influence on the body, the endocrinal glands and the nervous system. Pranayama affects the psychic centres of the body. When the body is purified, free from toxins, and the nervous system is capable of carrying all the impulses throughout the body, the psychic centres awaken.

So, even by practising hatha yoga a spiritual or semi-spiritual state can be achieved. Others feel that the same thing can be accomplished by simple meditation. Meditation affects the whole metabolism. It can control all the electrical impulses, the prana or the magnetism in the body by which you live, talk, think and participate in different activities. So meditation, raja yoga, is a very important part of yoga, and scientists have conducted many experiments on people in meditation. How does meditation affect the rate of oxygen consumption? What happens to the skin resistance? Thus yoga is not merely a set of exercises; one who practises yoga can systematically accelerate their spiritual evolution.

Whenever the word yoga is heard, the mind becomes calm and quiet and we have a hope of illuminating the darkness. Yoga will not eliminate the need for doctors, but it will help greatly to solve and reduce many medical problems. Yoga begins with hatha yoga and ends with union between the lower consciousness and the higher consciousness, *jivatma* and *paramatma*. Yoga means complete equanimity within yourself and with everybody else, with the vast nature and the whole cosmos. Yoga is complete acceptance of everything in life, whether pain or pleasure, defeat or victory, disease or death. Yoga brings about a complete understanding of the whole process of creation. ॐ





January–February

BSY Sambalpur unit held a yoga course to help people with digestive problems.

The MP School of Yoga in Raipur held a course to help people with diabetes and Swami Mahatmananda from BSY conducted a training course at the Government Women's Degree College and at the Agricultural College, Raipur.

Swami Satchidananda from BSY conducted a yoga program in Bihar Sharif.

Swami Nischalananda from BSY conducted residential yoga camps in Bangalore.

Swami Buddhananda from BSY held a workshop at the TA conference, Bangalore.

Swami Muktananda from BSY held courses for women in Bangalore.

Swami Vidyutananda from BSY conducted a course at Tisco, Jamshedpur.

February–April

Swami Satyananda conducted an All-India Tour. His itinerary included Sagar, Bhopal, Jabalpur, where he directed an All-India Convention organized by the Mahila Yoga Mitra Mandal, then Khamgaon,

Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Secunderabad, Rajnandgaon, Raipur, Sambalpur and Raigarh.

March

Swami Asheshananda from BSY conducted a seminar at Bachel.

April–May

Swami Buddhananda from BSY conducted courses in Bangalore and Thirumoorthy Nagar.

May

En route to Australia, Sri Swamiji met with devotees in Mumbai. In Sydney, Australia, he gave satsang and mantra diksha. On his return journey he gave satsang in Singapore.

On his return to India, Sri Swamiji presided over the Patna Yoga

Convention, which was organized by the swamis of BSY and inaugurated by Sri K.B.N. Singh, Governor of Bihar.

Swami Nityabodhananda from BSY conducted yoga camps in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Pune and Ajamgarh during May and July.

June

Sri Swamiji travelled to South America and conducted a yoga program in Medellin, Colombia. He returned to India in July for Guru Poornima in Bilaspur and then conducted a program in Gondia.

Swami Gorakhnath from BSY held yoga camps in Jabalpur.

July–September

Sri Swamiji again travelled extensively overseas, conducting yoga programs in Singapore, Athens, Barcelona, Antwerp,



Zinal, Copenhagen, Paris and London. He presided over the International Yoga Convention in Saint Patrick's College, Dublin, Ireland, which was arranged by the Belfast and Dublin Yoga Centres. He then presided over the Zinal Yoga Conference, Switzerland, organized by EUNFY.

October

Swami Mahatmananda conducted courses in Bachel, Jagdalpur, Akash Nagar and Kirandul.

Swami Atmadarshan from BSY conducted seminars in Delhi and Jagdalpur from October to December.

November

Aspirants from Perth, Australia, attended a special Kriya Yoga course at BSY.

November–December

Swami Nityabodhananda conducted seminars in Saraidhela, Gopalichak, Loyabad, Sijhua and Tetulmari.

December

Sri Swamiji directed the Kriya Yoga course conducted at Veerayatan and gave darshan and satsang in Rajgir.

A group of devotees from Italy led by Swami Anandananda attended a special Kriya Yoga course at BSY.

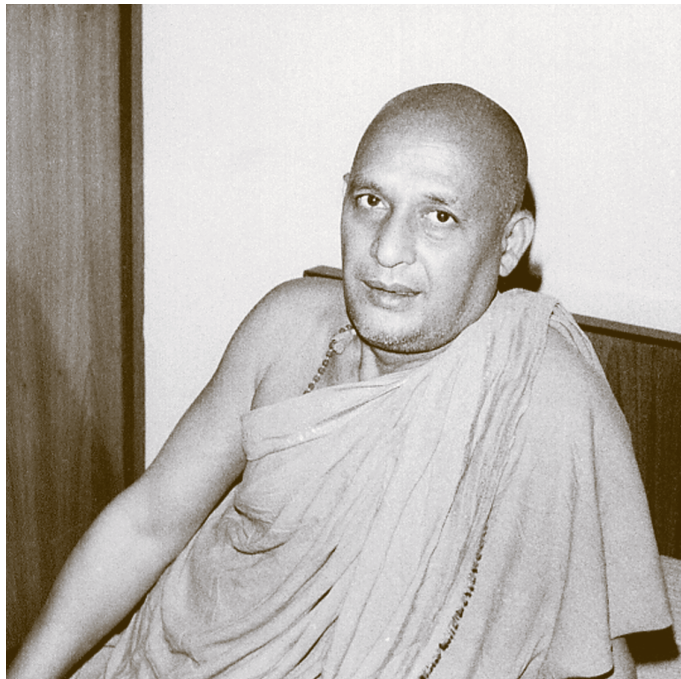


“I’ve just helped accommodate a group of kriya yoga students,” informed my friend as we walked down to the kitchen for afternoon tea.

Sipping into the delicately flavoured tulsi beverage, I remarked, “There are only two traditions that teach kriya yoga in the world. One is that of Babaji, who taught Lahiri Mahashay, grand guru of Paramahansa Yogananda, and the other is ours. Kriya yoga was Swami Sivananda’s farewell blessing to Swami Satyananda, one might say. He taught it to him in five minutes just as Sri Swamiji was departing the Rishikesh ashram. This wasn’t a mere lesson, of course, it was shaktipat, psychic transmission. Being the brilliant disciple that he was, Sri Swamiji caught every nuance of the practices and developed them in the scientific style characteristic of him.”



By the late seventies, the Satyananda system of kriya yoga had begun to draw many serious yoga aspirants. For several years these powerful techniques had been taught to selected disciples and sannyasins by Sri Swamiji. Now large groups had begun to arrive, seeking initiation into the kriyas under Sri Swamiji's personal supervision, after being prepared by their regional teachers.



The spectrum of yogic application had also broadened as its scientific basis had been demonstrated through researches conducted worldwide; thus BSY teachers could now take yoga to the next level under Sri Swamiji's guidance. 1979 saw several senior swamis of BSY spread all over India to conduct yoga programs.

Sri Swamiji continued to travel widely throughout India and overseas during the year, giving more responsibility to his experienced sannyasins and inspiring new ones, in his unique way, to a higher calling. As Swami Vibhooti, originally from Ireland, tells us.



Fly with me

"A man of true compassion – his eyes, his smile, his walk, his talk, his every movement and gesture – everything about Swami Satyananda, is utterly exquisite. An ineffable sweetness pervades him which we as mere human beings cannot possibly understand. Such a rare being will reach out his hand indiscriminately to anyone, anywhere in the world, at any time, who sends out the call for spiritual life, for his 'eye' is everywhere. Yoga prepares one up to a certain point, but still the longing increases for something 'other'. Then a messenger is sent and that messenger comes in the form of guru.

I did not enter sannyasa life due to any great spiritual merit or because I wanted to be a swami, but in my guru's own words I am just 'very fortunate'. Never having heard the word 'guru' or 'swami' I sank down on my knees in early 1979 and prayed in silent despair, 'If You do exist, show me some proof in human form'. Actually I was rather demanding in my application, but it must have been a good prayer because help came quickly. The inner command was, 'Be ready. Close everything. I am coming for you. Jump!' No question of choice.



A strong presence began to accompany me. Then came the first meeting one dawn, sitting for contemplation after yoga sadhana. With eyes closed I saw myself standing with a strange robed figure beside the sea on a full-moon night. I did not see his face, but he lifted me up and placed me on a slab of stone. With the raising of his gentle hand came that total surrender.

The force approached steadily nearer until on 20th September 1979, at a yoga convention it stood before me in the form of one Swami Satyananda, and I knew instantly, no doubt about it, that he and 'It' were the same. I was completely stunned: time and space seemed to dissolve and reason fled. I couldn't speak, couldn't think, couldn't move at that time. Hunger and sleep left also. He used to stop me and ask, 'Have you eaten? Have you bathed?' I could only look at him because it seemed I didn't have a mind then to know whether I had or not, inside I felt like a child of five.

Although he had turned me into a dumb idiot, I could still do one thing – work like one driven. Even when I tried to leave my duty to take a look through the keyhole at him sitting on the stage, his merciless mercy threw me back to work. What a wonder it all was! And all along it's been the same, he always tells me, 'Work hard!' His last direct instruction to me before he left Ganga Darshan was, 'Work like an elephant. Have your tail in one task, each leg in other tasks and your trunk in another so that you (the mind) can't move.'

Along with Sri Swamiji I have received another precious gift which has accompanied me from the very beginning, and that is the co-presence of Swami Sivananda. It was Sri Swamiji himself who guided me to read his biography, From God to God-man, and I met him through that book. Guru is the master of ajna chakra, while Swami Sivananda captivates the heart even though they are exactly one and the same. Once I struck a dark patch on the journey. Sinking into the darkness I prayed for mercy, and it was Swami Sivananda who appeared in a dream, sitting in all his light, eyes closed, singing in bliss with tears flooding down his face. Sri Swamiji has said, 'To think of Swami Sivananda is yoga' and this is the kind of yoga I like best.

So many beautiful incidents have occurred over the years. The glory of guru can fill volumes, and not just our guru, but all those rare souls whose light has illumined the world. The amazing thing is that the form of guru changes from moment to moment – from God to father, father to friend, friend to beloved, beloved to little innocent child and back again to God. I recall the day Sri Swamiji called me during a rain shower and said, 'Enjoy, compassion is coming down.' For the world today the name Swami Satyananda means yoga. For me he represents just one thing, compassion. And if God is compassion then he is 'That'.

One sentence of his has had the greatest impact upon me. As he reclined in Gokul one evening on his long chair giving satsang in 1980–81 he said, very softly beneath the hum of people, and almost inaudibly as if he didn't want everybody to hear, 'You people don't know what I do for you.' "

Yoga for Children

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

We are all children. We have created children in our own image. We do not merely create them and let them grow up in any way they like. We aspire to see beautiful flowers budding out of them.

For centuries children were not concerned with the practices of yoga. People believed that yoga was a mystic or occult practice, and therefore children were kept out of yoga groups. In the future, however, children will be more influenced by yoga than adults, for they accept yoga from the level of innocence. Adults understand yoga through the intellect. Therefore, yoga is going to do greater good to children. If you are convinced of this statement, you will expose your children to yoga.

There are many scientific reasons for introducing the practices of yoga to children. I have conducted many experiments on children to see how yoga influences their body, mind and personality, and I was compelled to conclude that yoga has a very important role to play in the structure and development of children's minds and bodies, and that children should be exposed to the practices of yoga.

Through the practices of yoga, the health of the pineal gland, which usually begins to degenerate after the age of seven or eight, can be restored and maintained, thereby creating a balance between the child's physiological and emotional personality. The pineal gland is a psychic eye. It represents the psychic consciousness of the child. With the degeneration of the pineal, the child's purity, innocence and capacity to communicate with the higher consciousness diminish. He becomes aware of the external environment, conflicts and the moral personality. At this time, the gap between the biological, psychological and emotional development in the



child is so great that he is often unable to bridge it. This is the main reason why yoga is so important for a child in his teens.

One of our major experiments began in the early 1970s at a higher secondary school in Paris. After months of teaching and experimenting, inspectors from the French Board of Education came and interviewed the children, their parents and teachers. The report that followed aroused great interest amongst authorities in the education department and the school was granted financial assistance to help further their research work. Experiments conducted in Bulgaria also showed that children can learn and master foreign languages in a few weeks if the class is given after a session of yoga nidra, whereas previously it took two or three years. When

the mind is relaxed, obstacles are overcome with much less difficulty. Similarly in the high school in Paris, it was found that students memorized the different parts of the body in a foreign language much more easily after a session of yoga nidra. They also held a special class for children who were slow in learning. They were taught concentration at the eyebrow centre for three to four minutes and then the lessons were given. The results showed improved concentration and understanding, and the children were able to be reintegrated back into normal classes. We have also experimented with children in other parts of the world including schools in Switzerland, Australia and the municipal village schools in Germany. Research is continuing in India also.

The effects of introducing yoga into classrooms results in a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, improved memory and an ability to understand lessons. In addition, the relationship between teachers and pupils and between the children themselves becomes smoother.

Children often do not respond favourably to classroom lectures. They respond out of compulsion and fear. Their only objective is making it through the examination hall. In the yogic system, however, education is carried out by a process of transmission. Children are psychically very sensitive and they respond much better to a transmitted form of knowledge. Their capacity to imbibe is fantastic. It isn't necessary to tell them all the intellectual or academic details. Nature has provided them with a necessary amount of intuition to know what is good and what is bad. But unfortunately this natural gift is gradually being destroyed by modern methods of teaching. Therefore, in trying to educate children, we must remember the word 'transmission'.

We should not consider a child to be just a bundle of flesh, blood and bones. You will have to accept that your child is a moving, mobile energy pattern. It is not enough to feed him with food or stuff his mind with book knowledge. These things are necessary, but at the same time you have to take care of the thousands of energy currents that are flowing in his body, and which ultimately maintain the whole structure of his existence.

When the child reaches his twenties, the metabolism slows down slightly and the body begins to accumulate waste. When that waste is not thrown out, it reacts on the biological, physiological and mental structure. At this time he needs a system and a discipline. I am talking about self-discipline, not about institutional, religious or social discipline. There is a system of balance in the physical body. If you know the secret of how to create harmony between the energy patterns in the body, you can automatically create an idea of discipline in the child.



Discipline is an expression of profuse harmony in body and mind. You don't have to do anything; you don't have to say anything to the child. Imposed discipline and morality are the first things that mankind has to leave behind. Children have to be disciplined by indirect methods, and this discipline comes through the practice of certain yogic postures and pranayama.

The foremost problem of children is that they try hard to have a first-class memory, but they can't actually make it. What limits their capacity? Does it mean that the child doesn't have a particular circuit in the brain? No, it means that not all the brain circuits are functioning. If we divide the whole brain into ten compartments, then normally only one part of the brain is functioning to cope with daily life and the

other nine sections are silent. Sometimes the brain is able to transmit an electric or magnetic wave from one of the silent areas, which creates a flash or an idea, and one becomes a scientist. Another part of the brain throws a wave and one hears some notes, and becomes an eminent composer.

It is necessary to develop these silent areas of the brain if you want to give expression to your genius. There have been geniuses in every field, but we have not made them. They were freaks of nature, an accident. Nobody knows how to develop genius in the child. In order to do this we will have to create a process which will awaken all the silent areas of the brain. These silent areas of the brain are the dormant potential centres of energy. Within them, there is education, knowledge, awareness, a completely

computerized process. The brain is a storehouse of thousands of faculties, but the child can only become a master of these faculties by developing his power of perception and bringing this storehouse within his area of conscious command.

It is training of the brain that is important. Training the brain in its structural basis is discipline. If you are not able to discipline the energy patterns of your brain, you will not be able to increase the faculties of perception, even if you accept any religious discipline. Religions say, "Become pure and you will become great." I say, "It is impossible; purity is a social quality." If all people are pure, society will be a sleeping society. I am not against purity, but I have no faith in it.

You must increase the capacity of perception and awareness of your children by scientific means. In the brain and body there are monitoring centres. You can monitor them through modern machines, and you can also monitor them through concentration on those respective centres. You do not have to push your children to practise yoga. You should tell them about it without creating the impression that in order to practise yoga, they must become puritans or religious. The only way that yoga should be explained to children is as a method of enlargement of their perception and awareness.

Traditionally, all children are made to follow the same system, but this is wrong. Everybody is born with a different

innate capacity. Some are made to be intellectuals, some politicians. There are so many faculties which can be developed. Do parents know what is the inherent capacity of their child, or do children know themselves? For instance, when I was in my twenties, if I had not taken this road, maybe I would have been a tremendous failure in life.

A person who is capable does not succeed everywhere in life, but only in that particular field for which he is made and chosen. Who is going to decide the mission of the child? That is the perfect puzzle, the greatest question. I do not refer to vocation here – becoming a doctor or a professor – that's a different thing for which we receive a particular education. I am talking about a greater dimension of education which teaches us what we have to do, which shows us what the expression of our existence is going to be and how best we can fulfil it.

When I talk about yoga in the field of education, I mean the inclusion of yoga in every aspect of a child's life. It should be understood that we are not talking about physical exercises. We don't intend it to become just another subject for examination where teachers have to mark a paper to pass or fail a child.

We have to understand yoga in the right perspective. Asanas are certain postures of the body which were revealed by the great sages who were the scientists of their own time. Each particular posture influences a certain gland in the endocrinal system.

Sarvangasana, the shoulder stand, influences the secretions of the thyroid gland. This gland has a profound effect on the physical, emotional and mental development of children. If it is not functioning properly and secretes too little hormone, the child may appear sluggish and sleepy because the body metabolism slows down. Intellectual faculties become dulled and it may even lead to mental retardation. If the gland over-secretes the child will be overactive both physically and mentally, and unable to relax.

When we teach children shashankasana they lower their bodies in the same way as while praying in a temple.



Shashankasana influences the adrenal glands. By regulating the secretions of the adrenal gland we can help children overcome their problems of anger, irrational fears and other emotional upsets. It affects the degree of tension and relaxation in the body and mind. Some children are so afraid of the dark that they cannot go to the bathroom alone at night. They imagine ghosts coming to them while they are sleeping and so on. These are irrational fears and can be tackled by the practice of asanas and pranayama because they exercise an influence on the endocrine glands of children which need developing. Other valuable asanas are surya namaskara, bhujangasana, marjariasana, and so on.

We say our children are not able to concentrate, their minds are like jumping monkeys. Through the practice of pranayama we can help them integrate all the forces of their personality while they are studying or preparing for school. Pranayama has long been misunderstood as breathing exercises, but it is actually intended to create a balance between the mental and physical forces. In yogic terms these two forces are represented by the ida and pingala nadis respectively. When these two nadis flow at the same time and the temperature is equal in both, then the third important nadi, known as sushumna, begins to flow. When ida is predominant, the right side of the brain is active. When pingala is flowing, the left side of the brain is operating. When both flows are equal, then sushumna opens and the whole brain is active and cooperating.

If we are able to awaken the sushumna nadi in a child by the scientific process of pranayama, we can awaken his full creative potential which is lying dormant and hidden, but which is a reality. We are bringing about the participation of the whole brain, not only in the child's studies, but in all spheres of his life.

There are many young people today who are floating in the darkness like ships without rudders. This is not because there is anything wrong in society or because they lack discipline. They are rudderless because they haven't found a base for their existence. If you can give this to children, you are giving the

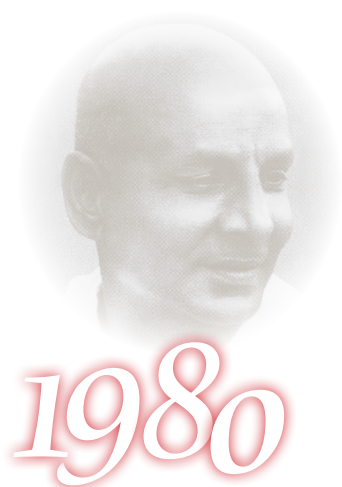
ultimate education. If a child is not able to concentrate on his studies, obey his parents or develop his social consciousness, it does not mean that he is bad. It means that he is incapable. The ability to understand situations, retain black and white images, memorize, interpret and reproduce, are all faculties of the brain. If a child is not able to do these things, it is because his computer is incapable. So we have to tackle the problems of education from this angle. Through the practices of yoga we can readjust the computer and make the brain work more efficiently.

In my ashram I live with children. I do not live with elderly people for they are often too serious, too particular, too tense. I do not want such tension; I want to laugh – without any meaning.

Sometimes, I want to do a somersault. I want to be relaxed like a child. One has to play with children. One has to consider the purity of water, the purity of God and the purity of children. It is said in the Bible and also by many great saints, 'Be like a child.'

Children are going to be the citizens of tomorrow. If their personality is not completely integrated, the structure of society will also suffer. Whether it is politics, social events or a great war, the children of today will be directing the future. We have had our turn, now let us help the children understand the secrets of themselves and the mysteries of life. The parents are the factories and the children are the finished products. Let us create products of the finest quality by teaching our children yoga. ॐ





January

Swami Satyananda inaugurated an ashram in Bolangir, Orissa, presided over the Bolangir Yoga Convention, then went to Kahalgaon for the Kahalgaon Yoga Convention.

A one-month Teacher Training Course began at BSY, Munger, to educate aspirants in teaching simple asanas which may help people develop physically, mentally and spiritually.

March

Swami Niranjanananda arrived in the USA.

BSY's Northern Ireland branch conducted a Teacher Training Course for primary school teachers from all over Ireland. The course was sponsored and organized by the Ministry of Education in Southern Ireland.

Swami Brahmailyananda from BSY toured Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Santo Domingo in the Caribbean.

April

Sri Swamiji began touring Europe, visiting Athens, Rome, Frankfurt, Vienna, Zurich, Brussels, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Paris, Barcelona and London. He returned to India at the end of May.

Swami Amritananda presided over a convention of the Italian Yoga Federation in Rome.

Swami Yogamudrananda toured Italy and Switzerland.

May

Swami Yogashakti conducted an extensive tour of central and South America.

Swami Kaivalyananda toured Europe.

July

Sri Swamiji celebrated Guru Poornima in Satna.

August–October

Swami Nischalananda conducted an intensive residential meditation camp for 30 students from France in Mahabalipuram, South India.

Sri Swamiji conducted an Intercontinental Yoga Seminar in Chamarande, France. He then attended the 6th International Yoga Week in Zinal, Switzerland. Both programs were sponsored by the European Union of National Federations of Yoga. He then toured Spain, where the program was organized by Satyananda Ashram, Spain.

Sri Swamiji then travelled to South America and presided over the International Yoga Convention in Bogota, Colombia.

November

After returning to India, Sri Swamiji inaugurated the District Yoga Convention in Bariarpur, Bihar.





By the first year of the decade of the eighties, yoga was clearly witnessing a resurgence. The rising interest in yoga in the West meant that many swamis began touring simultaneously, taking the essence of this ancient, universal science to everyone.

Sri Swamiji travelled extensively all over the world this year. His one-week long seminar at Chamarande, France, was particularly memorable. At the beautiful outdoor setting of this sprawling natural park, many had come looking for super yoga, but what they instead discovered was transmission yoga! For many it was a turning point in their spiritual life. At other locations such as Zinal (Switzerland), Barcelona (Spain) and Torino (Italy) as well, the participants' interest in the deeper aspects of yoga was evident and Sri Swamiji spoke at length on the higher dimensions of yoga and tantra.

At BSY, the one-month Teacher Training Course became a constant feature of life. Several were held each year, many by Swami Satyadharma, ensuring a thorough and systematic introduction to yoga for thousands of students over the ensuing years. Here she tells of the training process which transformed her into such an inspiring teacher.

Inner research

"Swami Satyananda is one of the greatest yoga researchers ever to have been born. He always lived his life in the spirit of a researcher. We think of research as something that takes place in the sterile confines of a laboratory with expensive hi-tech equipment, but Sri Swamiji always thought of research as a part of his everyday, moment to moment life.

The trend towards research started at a very early age when he began to have spontaneous out-of-body experiences. These experiences would leave everyone flabbergasted. He began to think, 'What is happening to me? Other people don't have this experience. What is the mental state I am entering? What is it all about?' This continued throughout his childhood and ultimately his parents sought the advice of eminent sages and saints.

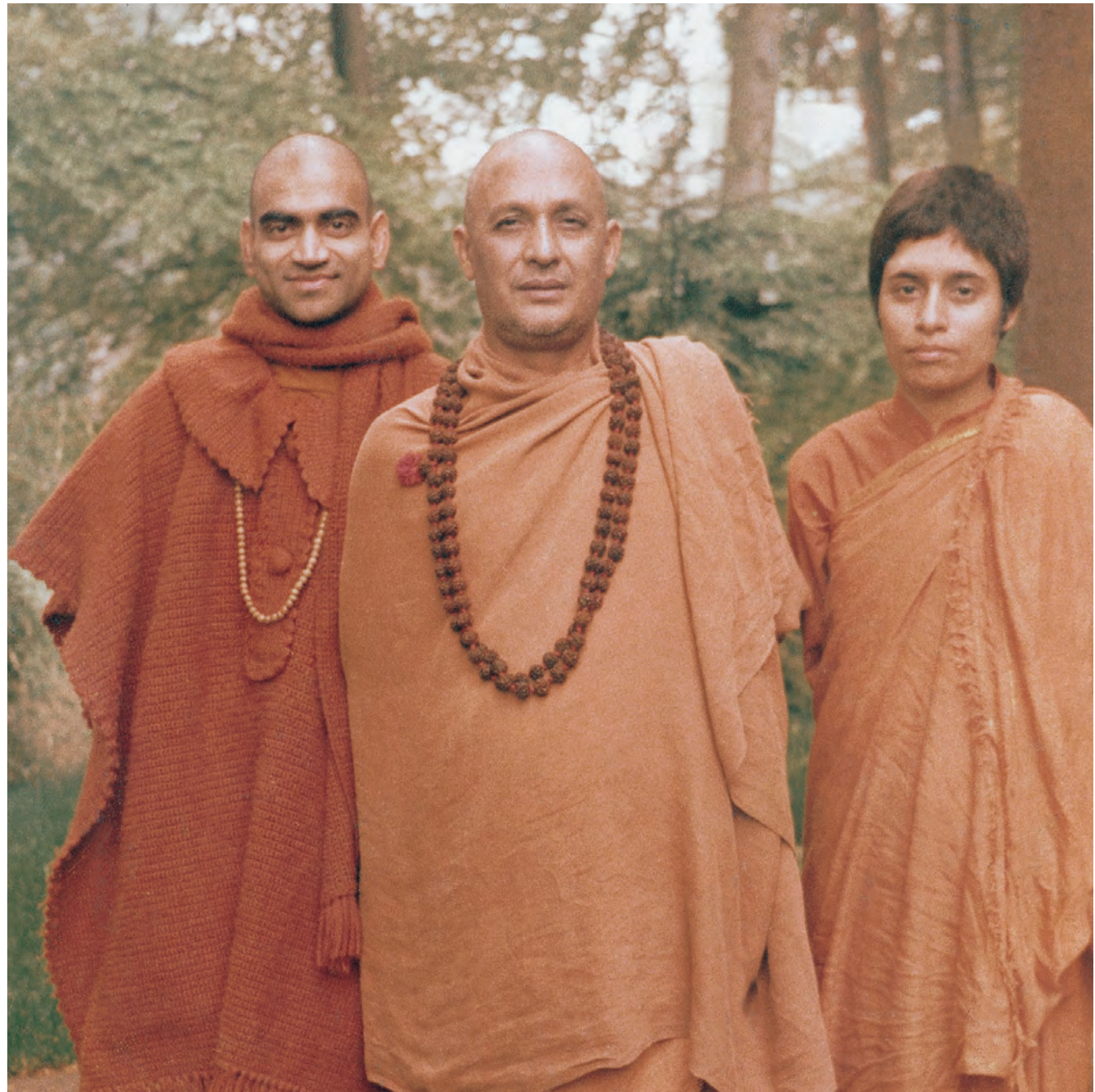
So, as a child, Sri Swamiji developed a very deep interest in the inner dimensions of the mind, how to know the mind, where to find the mind. This became a quest for him, something to be realized, something he would have to search for within himself. When his friends were getting married and studying for degrees at university, he was thinking about the inner search. So, he left home at the age of eighteen in order to complete this quest and discover what was happening at the deepest levels of consciousness.

After travelling in India for some time, he went to Rishikesh and there he met his guru, Swami Sivananda. He said to Swami Sivananda, 'I have had a lot of experiences spontaneously, not just in meditation. But I always come to a point where there is a block, and I can't go any further. Why does this happen? How can I overcome this block?' Swami Sivananda said, 'You have to work for some years and then the veil will lift.' So the young man said, 'Okay, I will stay here and work. I will be your disciple and serve you. I will do whatever you say.'

For twelve years Sri Swamiji stayed in his guru's ashram in Rishikesh, and his inner research deepened under the guidance of Swami Sivananda. Sri Swamiji also guided external research in Rishikesh. He worked with invalids and patients who came to the ashram for treatment, and tried out various yoga therapies on them. He kept a careful record of everyone he taught or worked on in some way, to establish the techniques that worked with different personalities and diseases.

Eventually, he left Rishikesh and travelled all over the world, meeting people from diverse backgrounds. He found that every single person had different problems, and he set to work to see how he could help them. He soon discovered that the one thing that worked best was yoga. Therefore, when he started his mission, it was yoga that he decided to focus upon. He founded the Bihar School of Yoga, and continued his experiments. Everyone who came to him, whether a devotee, student, or a young person like me coming to dedicate her life, became another experiment for him. He tried to work out how he would help them through his knowledge of different yogic practices.

Swami Niranjan was a special subject for Sri Swamiji's research right from his birth. He came to live in the ashram at the age of four.



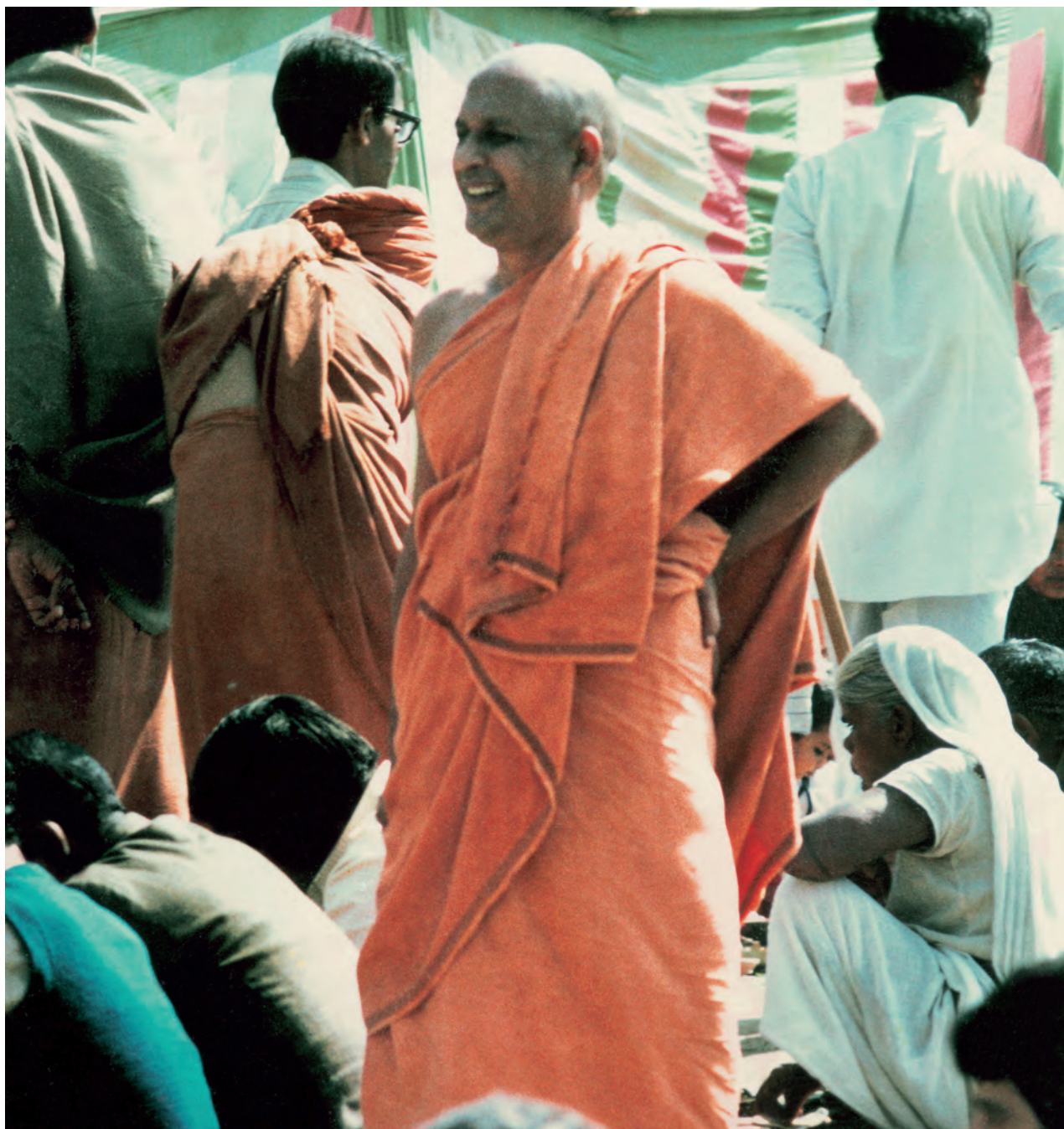


He was a very intelligent, precocious and gifted boy. Sri Swamiji used to say to him, 'Niranjan, you have to go to school,' and Swami Niranjan would reply, 'No, Swamiji, I'm not going to school.' The next day Sri Swamiji would again say, 'Niranjan, you must go to school; you have to learn.' Swami Niranjan would reply, 'No, I am going to learn in the ashram. You know everything. You will teach me everything I need to know.' So Sri Swamiji said, 'Okay, I'm going to try an experiment on you.' And so he did. He tried the experiment of yoga nidra on Swami Niranjan when he was a little boy.

Swami Niranjan used to sleep very deeply. Sri Swamiji kept a small cot for him in his room, and when Swami Niranjan was deeply asleep, Sri Swamiji would start reading to him. He read everything: history, mathematics, physics, geography, languages, Upanishads, Gita. Whatever he could lay his hands on, he would read to Swami Niranjan at night. This went on every night for two to three years. Today we can see that the experiment was very successful, because Swami Niranjan has become very learned and wise. True to his word, Swami Niranjan was not educated by the ordinary school system, instead Sri Swamiji taught him everything he needed to know.

Similarly, everyone became an experimental subject for Sri Swamiji. I was also a subject. When I first came to the ashram, I was in a very deep state of introversion. I did not want to communicate. I was not interested in anything or anybody in the external world. When people spoke to me, I would turn around and walk away. Sri Swamiji said to me, 'I am going to bring you out. Do you want me to do that?' I said, 'No.' He said, 'Yes.' I said, 'No.' He took a stick and said, 'See this stick? Every time I see you introverting, I am going to beat you.' I looked at the stick, looked at him, and said, 'Okay,' because nobody had ever spoken to me like that in my life. I thought, 'Yes, this is a person who is going to give me my answer.'

So, Sri Swamiji began his research work on me. The first thing he made me do was shankhaprakshalana, and I had to drink not fifteen or eighteen glasses of saline water, but fifty glasses, and then fifty more. When he asked me to drink another fifty glasses for the third time, I said 'No.' He said, 'Okay, but you have to work very hard.' He decided that he was going to cure me of my introversion through karma yoga.



He started me off with physical work. I would be woken up by a swami at three in the morning, take a cold shower and be ready for work by four. I used to clean all the drains, sweep the paths and then clean all the buildings from top to bottom. I had to carry the bricks, the buckets of water, and anything else that he could think of. He kept me busy all day, every day, and also made small children tease me, pinch me and laugh at me till I cried – just to bring me out. And slowly, the treatment worked.

A couple of years later, he said to me, ‘Now I am going to sharpen your mind.’ He gave me some written work to do. This involved reading, typing and editing his satsangs from his trips to Europe and other places. Once I came across a satsang in which he was explaining an experiment he had done on a lady from America who had come with some mental problems and had been cured. As I was typing, I realized that I was reading my own experimental results. In this way, over the years, many people came and went, and Sri Swamiji took each one on as a subject for research. We always thought that he made us his disciples because he loved us, but actually he was trying out different things on us to see how they worked.

One day I was standing on the roof of the old ashram. Sri Swamiji was there and he pointed up to the hill where Ganga Darshan now stands and said, ‘See that hill? One day we are going to have an international yoga research foundation there. Researchers and scholars will come from all over the world to do important research work there.’ At that time it was just an old dilapidated bungalow-type structure, and I thought to myself, ‘How will that ever become an international yoga research foundation?’ But just as he said, it is becoming one. In 1980, we all moved up there. Sri Swamiji built the whole infrastructure, and in 1984 inaugurated the Yoga Research Foundation. A few years later he left the place totally in the capable hands of Swami Niranjan and went out in order to further his inner research. He travelled all over India to find the ideal climate in which his research could expand further.

Finally he went to Rikhia, where he began the inner research that he had started as a small child and which he wanted to complete in his old age. The different sadhanas he has been doing since then were all forms of internal research. This also led him to some external ideas. He set up the village research, which he is still doing, where he finds different ways to help the poor people. With each project, he experiments to find out what will work

and what won't. He thinks about the mentality of the people: will they go for this, or will they go for that.

Sri Swamiji has been a researcher throughout his life. We are his disciples, but we are also his subjects. Even when he goes out of this life, he will go out as a researcher. He will be researching every step and dimension of the way."

"His presence appears to be so palpable for his disciples," remarked my friend.

"That is the nature of *satguru*, true guru," I said. "Let us ask Swami Nirmalratna. She came to Munger for the first time in the early eighties to meet Sri Swamiji."

He was always there

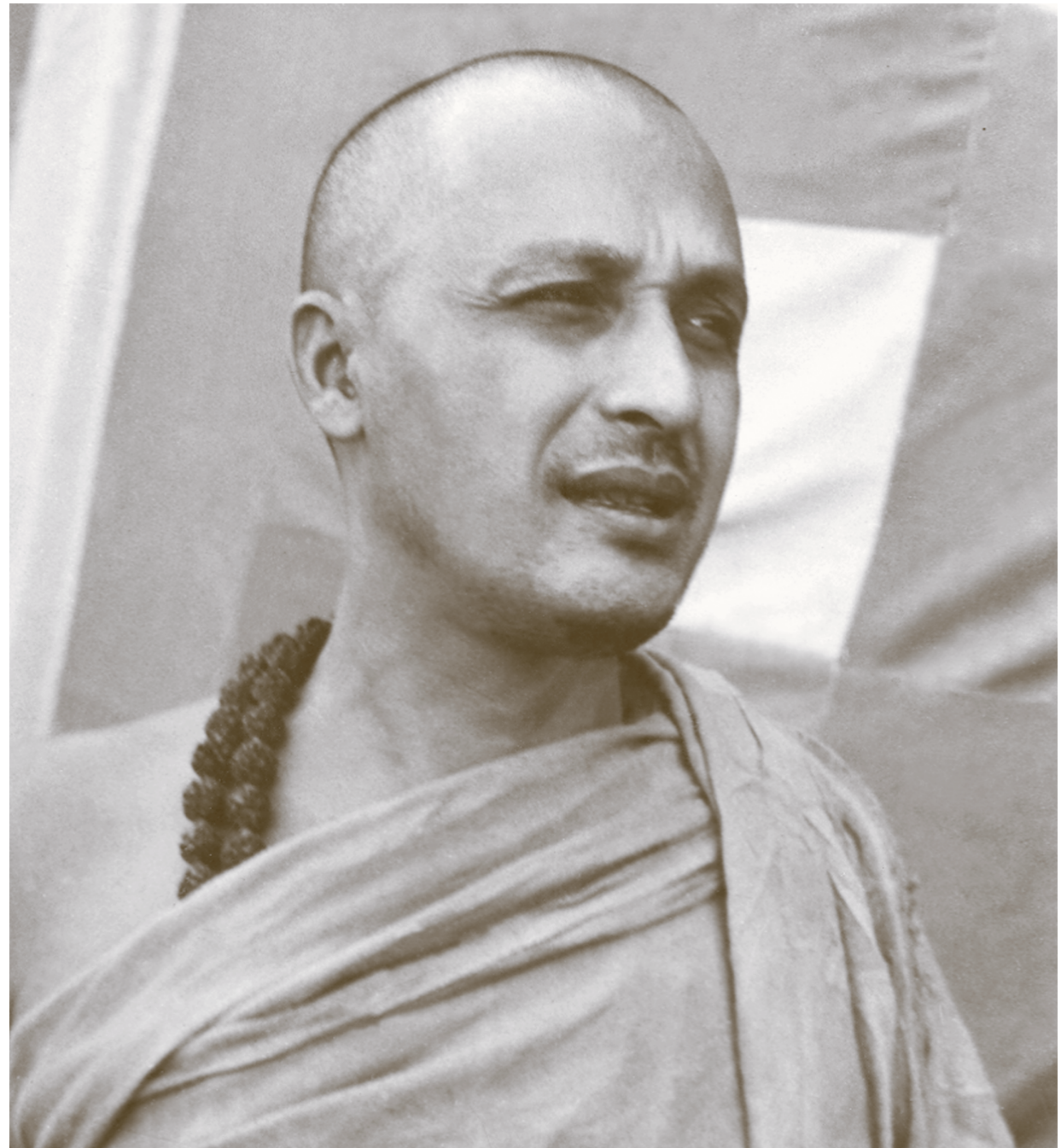
"My first meeting with Sri Swamiji . . . I looked into his eyes, and everything disappeared. There was just an endless nothingness all around, a new space of silence . . .

Sri Swamiji was always around. He walked up and down, watching everything. Now and then he joined the swamis in whatever we were doing. He held the water hose as we swept the floors. He helped us lift the baskets of weeds and stones as we cleared the grounds of Ganga Darshan. He opened the doors for those going into or out of the rooms with arms full of objects.

One day he called me and said that I should help with the construction work. The swami in charge was fixing two wooden pelmets in the corridor outside Sri Swamiji's room in Yoga Arogya. When I needed a hammer to hit the bamboo nails into place and secure a pelmet to the wall, Sri Swamiji was there. He bent down, took the hammer from the floor and handed it up to me.

The night before Sri Swamiji left for an overseas trip, a special dinner was prepared. Sri Swamiji was there, helping to light the candles when the electricity went off, and making certain that we few visitors were served first. I sat in the doorway of the room underneath those new pelmets, ate the prasada, and savoured the final moments of my first experiences with him. Although I hadn't asked him for sannyasa diksha, something that had been on my mind for six months, I was certain that he would be there another time.

Almost twenty-eight years later these small incidents from my earliest meeting with Sri Swamiji still play very clearly in my mind. In fact, I always feel he could appear at any moment. Somehow, he's always present. He always will be."



Message to Yoga Teachers

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

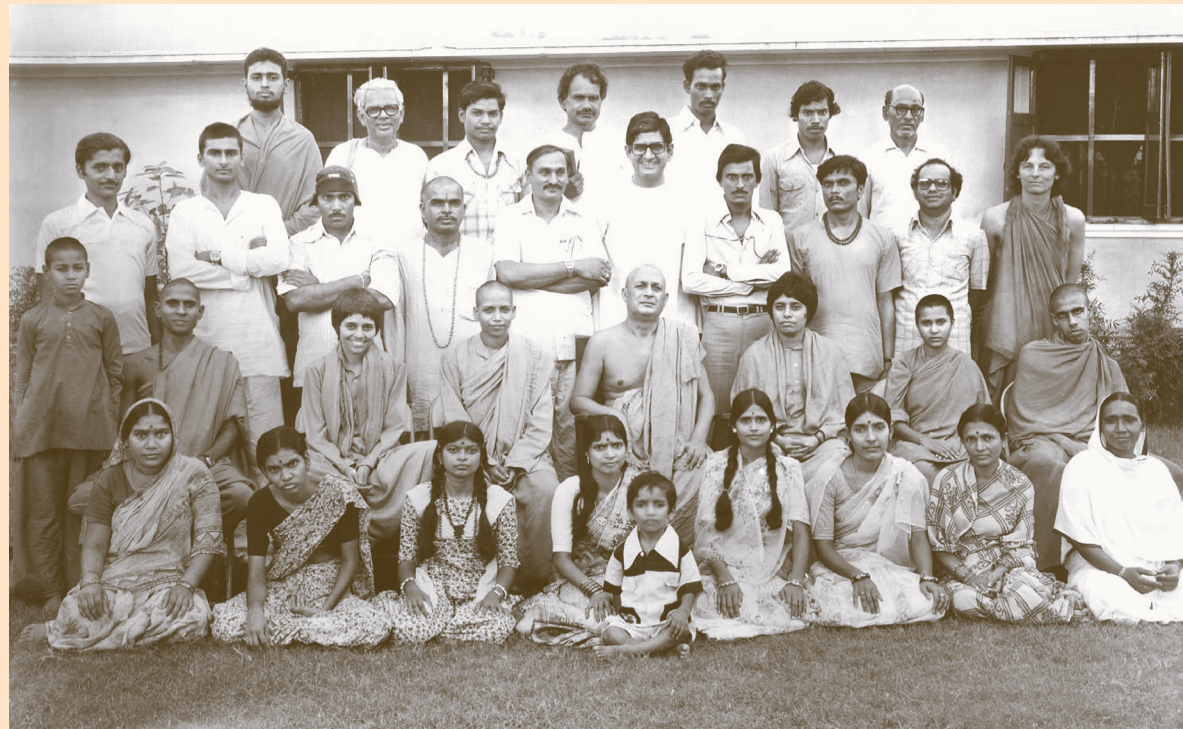
Humanity has reached a turning point in our time, and mankind has to decide what to do. All kinds of preparations have been made for disaster and also for self-evolution. Yoga is one of the most powerful means and a very efficient tool for self-evolution. Around the globe, man has become conscious of this tool called yoga and has realized the great role that yoga will play in the evolutionary cycle of mankind. People now understand what it means to practise yoga. Many governments encourage the study and practice of yoga.

In the past many people taught physical exercise in the name of yoga, but they did not know what yoga really was. In India, experiments on yoga have continued for centuries, and the seers visualized man not merely as a bundle of flesh and bone, but as an integrated personality with different dimensions of body, mind, psyche and spirit. Today, man really needs this science of yoga in order to help him keep pace with evolution.

At this critical time, all of you who have been authorized to teach yoga should understand your place in history and direct your responsibilities. Since yoga is a tool responsible for the transformation of consciousness, every culture will be influenced by it. All the arts and sciences have been perceived and constructed by the higher qualities of the human mind. Therefore, if the quality of perception is upgraded, then the whole civilization will also be upgraded.

Therefore, yoga teachers have a special role to play in the future development of people. We cannot remain satisfied with being ordinary instructors of the science of yoga. In yoga we have a system, a science and more than that, a very great historical tradition. Science without a tradition is no science at all. The science of yoga has everything to do with man, and nothing but man. It is not a system where you sport with your lower self; it is not a game where you become introverted and oblivious to the conditions of man's existence. Yoga teachers must understand that they are not only responsible for imparting intellectual knowledge. They should feel a responsibility for imparting the way to develop a higher quality of personality. They should not be satisfied only with teaching what is found in textbooks. Yoga is first-hand knowledge, which must be transmitted through experience.

Thousands of years ago, yoga was practised throughout the world, but



with the ravages of time this knowledge was lost and thereafter man became unaware of why he was born and what his real potentials were. I have a clear vision of great possibility. I have always understood that yoga is going to be a mighty world culture, but when I say this I do not mean a political culture. I have studied political science and I am not prepared to accept that there can be a pure culture on the basis of politics. Man's thinking, heritage, objective and social system should be free from any type of political influence. We have seen that whenever politics influenced culture and religion, they collapsed after some time.

Yoga is a mighty culture in the sense that its influence will be academic, intellectual and spiritual.

Therefore, the mission of those who teach yoga is to maintain the intellectual and spiritual reality of this science. I have only one mission in life. I am not interested in making disciples and establishing ashrams. The only thing that I have in my mind is to spread yoga from shore to shore and from door to door. I have not recognized the role of religion in man's spiritual destiny.

Man's nature is spiritual; his social personality is only a shadow which is always changing. Man is going through a crisis in his life; his inner self, his spiritual personality is suffering. Why is man stumbling on the path? Nobody suggests that perhaps it is because he is blind. They say he stumbles because there is a stone. The crisis in history is due to man's incapacity

to see the block. If you ask people why they are suffering, they will say that education is at fault or the times are bad; they will give all kinds of reasons for the crisis. But they will never say that man's nature has become ignorant and spiritually blind. We have to see the crisis from all angles. If you have an undeveloped mind, how can you solve a problem correctly? It is like the seven blind men describing an elephant – one said it was like a pillar; another said it was like a heavy curtain. Each was relating his own experience of the part of the elephant that he was touching. If only those wise men had seen the whole picture, they could have given the right explanation!

The philosophy of Samkhya is a system which gives a complete explanation of the evolution of the mind. As the mind evolves, your perceptions change. When the mind is predominantly tamasic, rajasic or sattwic, the perceptions are different and so are the assessments. Then again, the mind is not composed of one element or one substance. It is composed of various elements, which means that for evolution of the mind you have to ensure that all the elements go through the process of transformation.

When we talk about transformation of mind, we are talking about a very scientific subject. If you try to push the mind into a moral process, internal transformation cannot take place. What we have to do is process this primitive state of mind in different phases like we would do with matter or chemicals. In India, teaching yoga is not merely a profession for the sake of work. It is a profession for the sake of charity and compassion. All those who teach yoga must remember that they are teaching for the health, welfare and peace of many.

Every science, art and socio-political system has some influence on the evolution of human consciousness. However, the world is changing so fast that we need a solid spiritual culture, a culture not merely dependent on external things and the intellect, but a culture which is an expression of the spontaneity of human existence. A tangible change cannot be

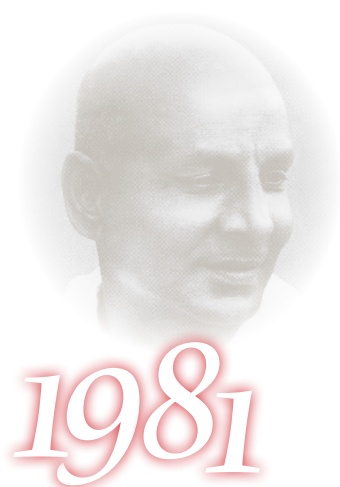


effected in the order of mankind by intellectual brainwashing. Unless the whole thinking process itself undergoes a complete change, evolution can never take place, no matter what you do or say. No religion can be an exception; no socio-political philosophy can remain aloof.

The science and practices of yoga gradually bring about an acceleration and evolution in the total consciousness, and I have every reason to believe that yoga is going to direct the course of man's future philosophy. So who are we? We are the foundation builders, the spade diggers, and the work we have been doing in every part of the world is a positive contribution to this mission. Teachers of yoga have laid the cornerstones in different countries. They will build the solid foundations of a new world order in which people can live with optimism and by a philosophy that promotes illumination and growth.

I live for yoga and I think of nothing but yoga, and I am very clear in my thinking. I know that yoga is going to be a mighty culture, not only of the East or West, but of the entire mankind. Yoga is the light, no matter where the darkness is. I have not come to give blessings, but to tell you to continue the work with greater vigour and optimism, and gain greater positive results. Do your best to carry the system of yoga from door to door and from shore to shore.

Yoga is not my profession, nor is it yours. For us it is an important part of the history of mankind. If we do not understand the importance of yoga in this context, history will blame us in the years to come. I know very well that experiments in the past have failed to carry the goods to mankind. There has never been any philosophy which has united religions and nations. There has not been any system which has worked well with different religions, cultures, habits and denominations. I don't have to convince you; it is very clear that yoga has brought people together under one canopy. As humanity goes on practising yoga there is no doubt that the quality of mind and the nature of individuals will change. Yoga has to be given to humanity with this spirit, and with profound knowledge and respect. ॐ



January

Swami Satyananda toured from January to March, conducting seminars, satsangs and other programs in Mumbai, Bangalore, Mysore, Hasan, Trivandrum, Coimbatore, Trichy, Madurai, Chennai, Nivel, Hyderabad, Patna, Delhi, Ghaziabad and Bhopal. Maha Shivaratri satsangs were held in Raipur, where Sri Swamiji also inaugurated the Bhilai Steel Plant Yoga Convention and conducted a program at the Russian Club. He then returned to Munger via Raigarh.

February

Swami Amritananda toured South India, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Bangalore and Udalampet from February to March.

March–April

Swami Mangalmurti from BSY held classes in Mumbai. Swamis Nityabodhananda and Nigamananda from BSY toured Jamshedpur, Ranchi, Daltanganj and East Katras.

April

Sri Swamiji flew to Europe from Delhi. He

conducted a seminar on 'Tantra, Yoga and Meditation' in Italy, and then presided over the first Panhellenic Yoga Convention on 'Yoga and Health', organized by Satyananda Ashram, Greece.

On his return to India, Sri Swamiji inaugurated a yoga seminar at the Bhagalpur Engineering College.

Dr Swami Karmananda from BSY held a yoga shivir on asthma in Tamil Nadu.

May

Raigarh Ashram in MP conducted a series of Yoga Health Management courses of one month's duration from May to December, inspired by Sri Swamiji.

July

Sadhakas from Switzerland, Colombia, Brazil and Italy came to Munger for a special Sadhana Course for Overseas Students, which culminated in the Guru Poornima celebrations in Jabalpur, MP.

July–August

Sri Swamiji flew to Finland and then to France for yoga conventions in Paris and Chamarande. In August he held programs in Belgium, Torino (Italy) and Zinal (Switzerland).

August–September

Swami Amritananda toured extensively in South America. Sri Swamiji visited Austria in September.

November

Sri Swamiji inaugurated the ashram in Singapore, which had been founded by Swami Atmananda and devotees from Singapore. He was accompanied by Swamis Amritananda and Akhandananda from Satyananda Ashram, Australia, and other disciples.

December

Sri Swamiji toured South America; his program was organized by Satyananda Ashram, Colombia.

Swami Amritananda travelled to Spain for a program organized by Satyananda Ashram, Spain.





“**W**ould you like one?” said my young friend, handing me a chrysanthemum from the basketful he was carrying, early one morning.

“You seem to have a new job,” I remarked.

“Yes, I have been inducted into gardening. I learnt the special technique of watering rose bushes, pruning trees with secateurs and bringing down ripe coconuts with the help of a rope and a man who can climb without support!”

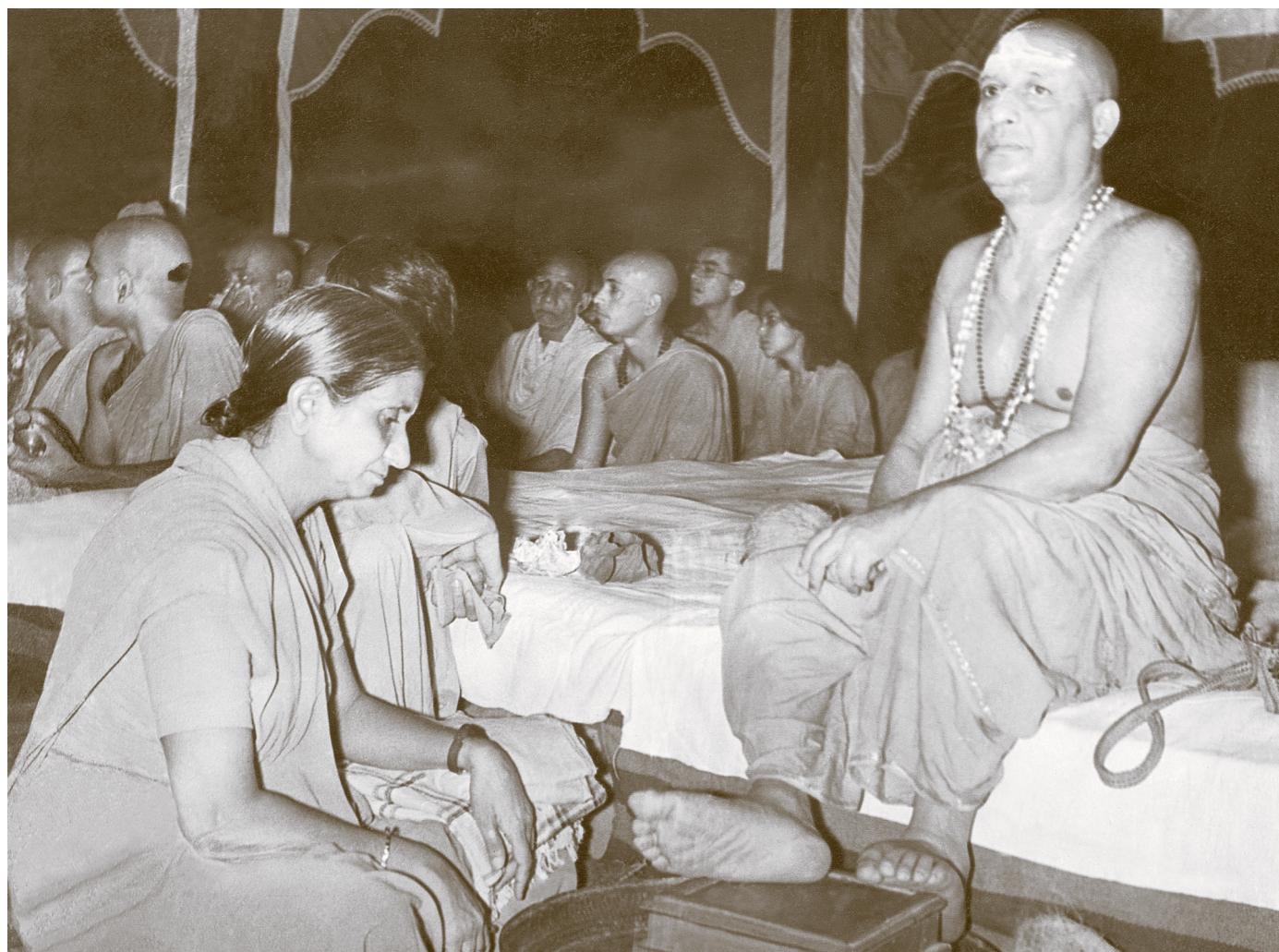
Putting the chrysanthemum back in the basket, I said, “That flower is not for me; it’s for pooja. For our personal pleasure, we pick the ones freshly fallen on the ground.”

Not one to take offence at ashram codes, he replied, “You’re right. Let me deliver them to the akhara, and then I want to hear about 1981.”

In 1981, the huge amount of work that Sri Swamiji and his disciples had poured into the task of spreading yoga from door to door and shore to shore continued. In fact, the movement had become self-perpetuating. The initial stream had become a great river which seemed capable of lifting the lives and consciousness of all who came in contact with it. From a small ashram cradled by the Ganga, surrounded by the timeless paddy fields of Bihar, the science of yoga had emerged and was reaching cities and villages all around the world.

Among Sri Swamiji’s overseas trips this year, Greece held prominence. Here, in the city of Thessalonika, he presided over the first Panhellenic Conference of Yoga and Health, consolidating the work that had been zealously undertaken since 1977 by Swami Sivamurti in both urban and rural areas of the country.

This was also the year when the yoga mission in South-East Asia received impetus. Swami Atmananda had been in the region for a few years strengthening the movement, now Sri Swamiji visited the ashram founded by her in Singapore and inaugurated it.



In Paris, Micheline Flak (Swami Yogabhakti) successfully dealt with the challenges of her country’s Education Department, so that France became a country that includes yoga as a subject in its schools’ official curricula. She tells us how this significant achievement came about.

Yoga and education

“It was in 1973 that I met Swami Satyananda in BSY, India. I had known his lifelong interest in education and that was one reason I

wanted to meet him. A few months before our first meeting, one day in the classroom of the school where I was the English teacher, I started the lesson with a short relaxation session. Somehow it came over me that I had to do it. It was because the same process had been enacted a number of times with so many other teachers, my colleagues, who had been yoga practitioners and felt that one day they could transfer to the children what they had experienced within their own body and mind.

One day I realized there were many points I wished to have cleared. The first one was that the children had liked yoga relaxation very much, which is a strong point, as when parents and authorities have to be convinced, children are the best ambassadors.

The second point I noticed was that relaxation had excellent effects on their attention, their attentiveness and that it could, under certain circumstances, lead to better learning and improved mental faculties. It especially enhanced long-term memory.

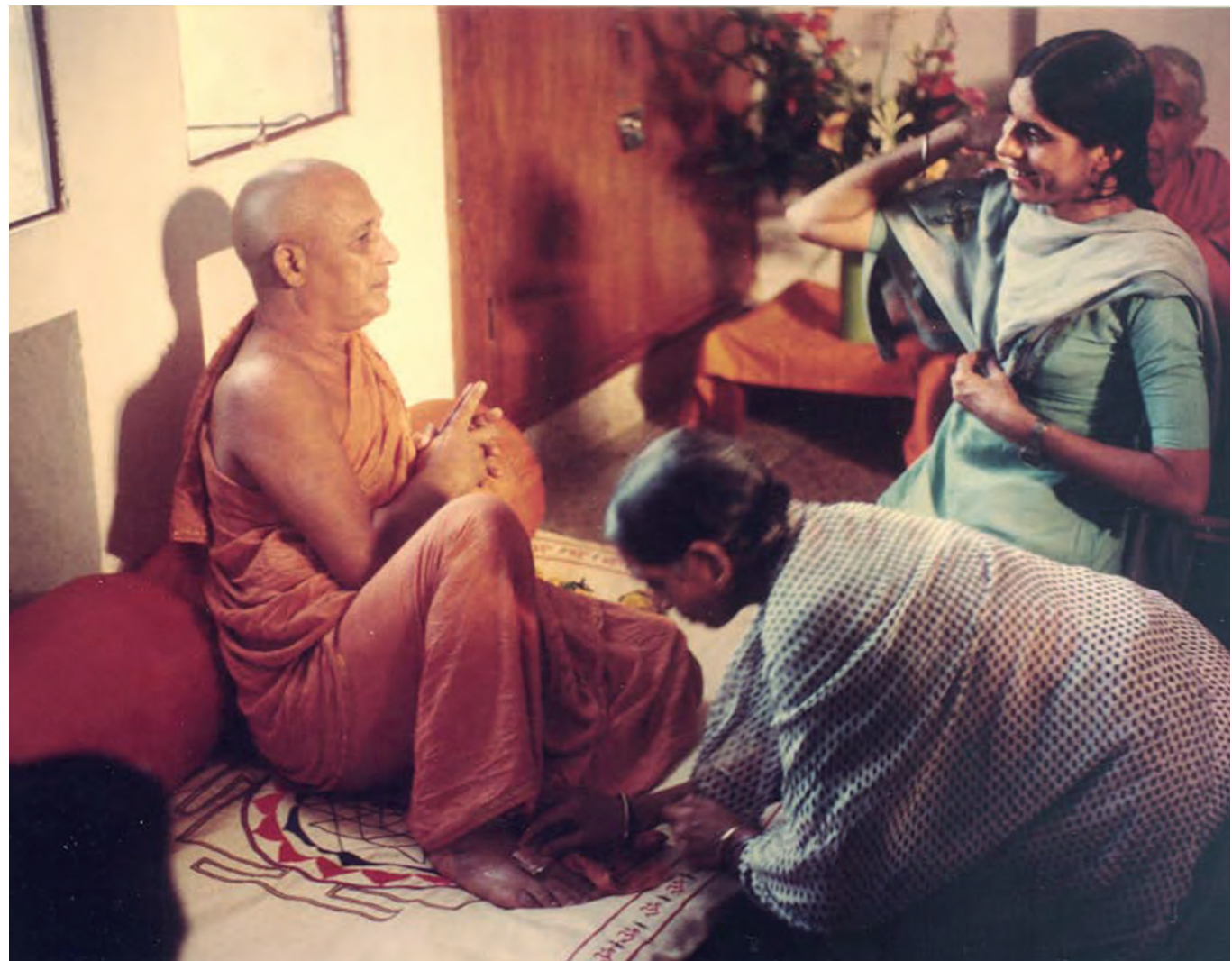
The third point was that yoga could serve as a cognitive science. Instead of just being adjusted to well-being, it could aid in the development of concentration. In fact, this is close to the teachings of Patanjali, because relaxation comes before dharana, concentration, and this is exactly the need of today's school system.

Nowadays in industrialized countries, teachers complain more of the dispersion of mind and the unruliness of the young generation. It is a fact that, physically, modern children move all the time. It is very difficult in normal circumstances to keep them in one place. Teachers often become irritable and depressed because they cannot handle that type of anarchic energy. Due to those outbursts of abnormal agitation, the quality of learning is somehow diminished.

We live in times when children must learn a lot of things at school. Children have to learn a lot of mathematics, biology and languages as well as art, music, physical training, etc., so their schedule is very full and they suffer from fatigue and nervousness.

A school is the mirror of society. It is very porous to all outside influences. Since these influences are sometimes deleterious, some excellent influences should be made to enter the school system as well. One of these positive influences is no doubt yoga, as yoga has such wonderful effects on the body, emotions, intellect and psychological make-up of each person. It can also open up channels of creativity which one needs in order to see the emergence of new values. It is a fact that a lot can be obtained through yoga with very little effort; for instance, a few breathing exercises at the beginning of a class helps the children recover their mental and nervous balance very quickly.

A short yoga nidra session of six to seven minutes will help them become receptive. There is a story. One day Mulla Nasiruddin is sitting



at the village fountain, holding a pot which is cracked so badly that the water is leaking out. People around him are laughing. 'Nasiruddin, are you expecting to fill up your pot when it is leaking so much?' Nasiruddin says, 'I am not concerned with the leaking, I am just concerned with having the water poured into it.' That is exactly the situation of teachers who are pouring tons of knowledge into pots which are leaking, and what yoga could do would be to stop that leakage from the

children's brains and make their brains more receptive to what we have to teach them.

As I was speaking about yoga in the confines of my school and writing a few articles in specialized magazines, it came to the ears of a person in the Education Minister's cabinet that a type of innovation was taking place in the high school. He took note of it and thought it might be interesting. In 1983 he



summoned me and other people who were doing striking work of this sort and were not yet recognized.

In Chamarande we had an official conference and at that time I introduced the Research on Yoga Education, RYE, techniques. The people there liked it very much. It was funny to see those big men and women, who were delegates, ready to lie down and do a short session of yoga

nidra and then sit up again and imagine that they were in the classroom and being given a lesson in English or mathematics and judge for themselves whether or not they understood it better than before.

They really liked it and since then we have been asked to train teachers in yogic methods. I would not say that it is common to all the regional boards

of education in France, but we are very active in many of them. RYE has many branches in France as well as in other countries.

The French education system is a completely lay system where no spiritual education is permitted because of the French tradition and also because now there are so many multiracial problems arising in French society and in the schools. We had to be attentive to the fact that we should not refer to any practices which affect the creeds and beliefs of the children and the parents. Therefore, we explained that the yoga practices were meant for better learning. In fact, this is very true.

Modern research in the field of education has shown very clearly that nowadays training of the mind is coming first. Methodology in learning should be taught not only to teachers and professionals, but also to children so they can understand the working of the mind in order to learn better. For example, when a teacher gives information to the students, he writes it on the blackboard, then the children write it down in their copybooks. Very often it is thought that because of this transcription, this writing process, the lesson is then learnt. This is a wrong assumption. Learning has to be impressed in the mind before you can say that the lesson or the theory in mathematics is understood. So there is a lot of mental work to be done.

A French researcher called Antoine de la Garronie has led very interesting studies, saying that in order to learn well you have to study the mental management of those students who have done very well. Some students are repeating the lesson in their minds, others have a way of visualizing a page in their minds, and those who are doing very well, in fact are doing both. This can be studied precisely, and taught, so that students can learn more efficiently through certain processes.

It can be said that modern research in the field of cognitive science is very close to the discoveries of the sages who have set up the science of yoga. It shows that knowing goes through some inner tracks, inner paths, and that it cannot be escaped nowadays when so much has to be learnt by the younger generation. Since the general theme is dealing with yoga in the twenty-first century, it is our children and our grandchildren who absolutely need new ways of education. Yoga can bring that to them.

It is wonderful to teach the new generation and I owe so much to the encouragement I received from Swami Satyananda when I told him about my first experience in 1973. Ever since, I always think of what he told me of that little step. He gave me two words, and those two words I hand over to you. He said, 'Go ahead.' "

Karma Sannyasa

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

Grihastha sannyasa, which I prefer to call karma sannyasa, is not a new order which I am introducing. It is very old. There are four traditional ashramas: brahmacharya ashrama, grihastha ashrama, vanaprastha ashrama and sannyasa ashrama. When you are not content with grihastha ashrama and want to get out of it so you can be reborn spiritually, but cannot get out of it, then the alternative is to live in it with a different awareness and philosophy.

In the olden days, at a certain stage of their married life a husband and wife would retire to the forest. That was known as *vanaprastha*. These days it is not practical or even possible for most people to do this. But once spiritual awareness develops, it is possible to continue in grihastha ashrama but with a higher philosophy. That is called karma sannyasa.

During grihastha ashrama you are involved in karma, which creates more karma. These karmas create samskaras to which you are bound because of *asakti* or involvement. It is possible to associate with your family, children, responsibilities and obligations either with attachment or detachment. However, you have only been taught to base your associations on attachment. Nobody has ever shown you how to live with your relatives, discharge your duties, solve your problems and interact with your family members, friends, wealth, money and property with detachment. The art of living a detached life is called karma sannyasa.

Detachment is not something that can be developed just by thinking or through any other intellectual process. Unless you have an experience which changes the quality of your mind, you cannot understand what detachment means. In order to understand *anasakti*, *vairagya*, sannyasa or detachment, you need more than just an intellectual process. You must have a different quality of mind. And for that purpose, the mind has to be trained and educated.

Intellectually you know that nothing belongs to you and that everything is temporary. You may even repeat this every day, but because there is so much *mamata*, mineness and attachment, whatever happens to someone else affects you, because you relate yourself to the incidents. In order to practise detachment or *anasakti*, you don't have to abandon karma or your material life. You have to only develop a philosophy, and through that philosophy you can have a different relationship with everybody. To develop that philosophy you must have an experience.

Karma sannyasa is very important for every householder. It is the same as *vanaprastha* ashrama. Even if you are not able to accept the idea of karma sannyasa, you can at least

practise it for fifteen days every year. What harm is there if you behave like a sannyasin in your family, if not every day of the year, at least for fifteen days?

How do you practise this? Sannyasins have a special way of living, which was codified in the vedic tradition. Whether it is eating, sleeping, walking, friendship, attachment, detachment, attending to deaths, births and marriages, there is a way they have been taught. If a grihastha lives the same life for at least fifteen days in a year, he will understand his grihastha ashrama and have a greater vision of the life he is leading.



Most people live the life of a householder not because they think that it is a life of dignity, but because they are under psychological, emotional or social compulsions. If these compulsions were not there, I don't think they would even want to live this life. That means we do not understand the proper place of grihastha ashrama in our evolution. Is the life of a householder meant only for wasting the mind on sensual objects? Is it not a stepping stone to realization? Why was this order created in the Vedas? What was its purpose? Was it progeny, pleasure, or was it self-realization?

Grihastha ashrama is a stepping stone. It is not an end in itself. From grihastha ashrama you should step into vanaprastha ashrama or what I call karma sannyasa. When should you step into vanaprastha ashrama? At the age of 56, when you have your first heart attack? Or at the age of 76, when you have been completely squeezed of everything? No, the moment you realize that grihastha ashrama is the means and not the end, and that within the involvement of life you must develop a deeper and higher, more perpetual, enduring and abiding awareness, get out immediately! Ask your guru for a geru dhoti, a spiritual name, a philosophy to live by and a goal.

A karma sannyasin has a goal. A grihastha does not have any goal, he is merely living. Provident fund, property, wealth or education of children cannot be the goal or destiny. A karma sannyasin has a single goal, his destination is one. There cannot be two destinations in terms of cosmic existence. Every being, sentient or insentient, mobile or immobile, whether vegetable, mineral, mammal, reptile, human, demon or god, is moving towards one destination and that is called perfection. That is called *poorna* or *paramatma tattwa*. You may refer to it as God, *nirvana*, *Vaikuntha* or *kaivalya*, but it means the same thing. The destination is only one, and when that goal is given to you by your guru, you are a karma sannyasin.

When you put on a geru dhoti, remember that this colour represents dynamism – dynamism not towards external life, but towards your sadhana, your quest into spiritual life. Geru is the colour of vairagya, dhyana and anasakti, but this colour does not represent a passive psychology. It symbolizes a dynamic approach to your goal. When you come back from the office or factory, put away your coat and pants and put on your geru.

If you cannot do this, I have another suggestion. Go to any ashram – not with your family, but alone. Shave your head completely, put on geru, sleep on the floor, eat only once a day, practise complete brahmacharya – in thought, word and



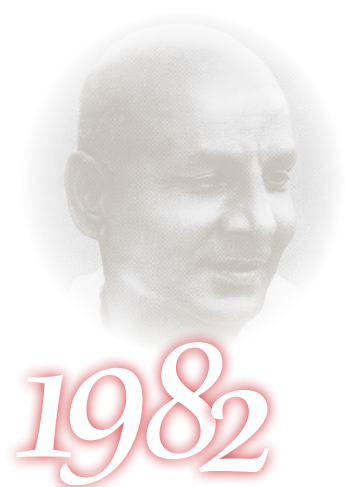
deed, and live like a poorna sannyasin – no smoking, no radio, no newspaper, no politics, no business, no market, just one thing: your sadhana. Your guru will tell you what to do, whether japa, likhit japa, reading the *Yoga Vasishtha* or the *Bhagavad Gita*, or practice of asana. If he doesn't tell you anything, just work in his kitchen or garden.

Even if you live the life of a sannyasin only for fifteen days, it will enrich you with very deep and abiding experiences, and create a new type of mind, personality and person. Then, when you return to grihastha ashrama, you will see things with different eyes. There may be births and deaths, marriages, conflicts and quarrels, but you will be able to attend to them as a different person.

When I spoke about karma sannyasa a few years ago, people did not understand it, but now more and more people are beginning to accept this philosophy. What I want is that seekers should accept this role. You do not have to wear geru to the office; it is not necessary. When you are a karma sannyasin, you must play the role of a perfect householder and a part-time sannyasin.

A philosophy is necessary, a goal is necessary and two geru dhotis are a must. You must also have a spiritual name, because the name that your parents have given you relates to your body and your faith, culture, family and race. But the atman has no religion or race and your name should be related to your atman. My name is Swami Satyananda, and the day I took this name, my destiny changed. All that was written in my astrological charts has not come true, not because the astrologer was wrong, but because my whole destiny changed. The moment you enter into a new philosophical area, the moment you begin to assert your spiritual willpower or the moment you acquire a new way of thinking, your destiny begins to change.

Karma sannyasa must become the order of the day, and it should revive vanaprastha. Do not wait until you turn 55. Even while you are married, in grihastha ashrama, you can be a karma sannyasin. ॐ



March–April

Swami Satyananda travelled to Spain, then London, Scotland and Manchester (UK) where he conducted seminars and retreats.

May

Sri Swamiji travelled to Japan, visiting Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, meeting Dr Hiroshi Motoyama in relation to yoga and research, and giving TV interviews. He then travelled to the USA, where Swami Niranjanananda from Satyananda Ashrams, USA, arranged for many devotees to meet him in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Sri Swamiji then travelled to Medellin, Colombia, and, with Swami Yogashakti from Satyananda Ashram, Colombia, and Colombian devotees, he visited ancient cultural sites. In Santo Domingo, Sri Swamiji inaugurated a yoga convention organized by Swami Brahmayidyananda from Satyananda Ashram, Santo Domingo. He also delivered a lecture at the Syrio-Lebanese-Palestine Club and to a large gathering of medical doctors. He conducted a series of TV programs on yoga and gave mantra diksha.

Dr Swami Karmananda conducted a Yoga Health Management seminar in Kolkata, and spoke to the Russian group at the Bhilai Steel Plant. He then lectured students at the Indian Institute of Management, Bhilai, MP.

July

The Guru Poornima celebrations were held in Munger for three days. At this auspicious time Sri Swamiji laid the foundation stone of the Main Building of the Ganga Darshan complex.

August

Sri Swamiji and Swami Satyasangananda travelled to the USA, where Swami Niranjanananda and Dr. Swami Vivekananda from Satyananda Ashrams, USA, had arranged an interstate tour. Sri Swamiji spoke with doctors at Elizabeth Hospital,



New Jersey. A program was also held at Swami Bhaktananda's ashram in Woodstock. At Ananda Ashram, Munroe, Sri Swamiji met Dr Ramamurti Mishra and his gurubhai Swami Nadabrahmananda. He lectured at universities in Virginia and Washington DC, and gave satsang and lectures in Detroit and Ann Arbor, Michigan.

September

In Denver, Colorado, Sri Swamiji spoke at the Divine Life Society and at the Metropolitan State College. In Los Angeles he lectured at the Annie Besant Foundation and spoke at California State University. In San Francisco he lectured at the First Unitarian Church and gave radio and newspaper interviews.



Sri Swamiji then travelled to Italy and conducted a four-day Kriya Yoga course in Turin with Swami Anandananda. He continued on to Spain, England, France and Switzerland. He returned to Italy, lecturing at the Trieste Town Hall. A three-day Hatha Yoga shivir began in Yugoslavia under his direction. He then returned to Italy for a three-day shivir in Rimini and the inauguration of the yoga centre in Florence. Finally Sri Swamiji travelled to Greece, visiting Athens and Thessaloniki.

October

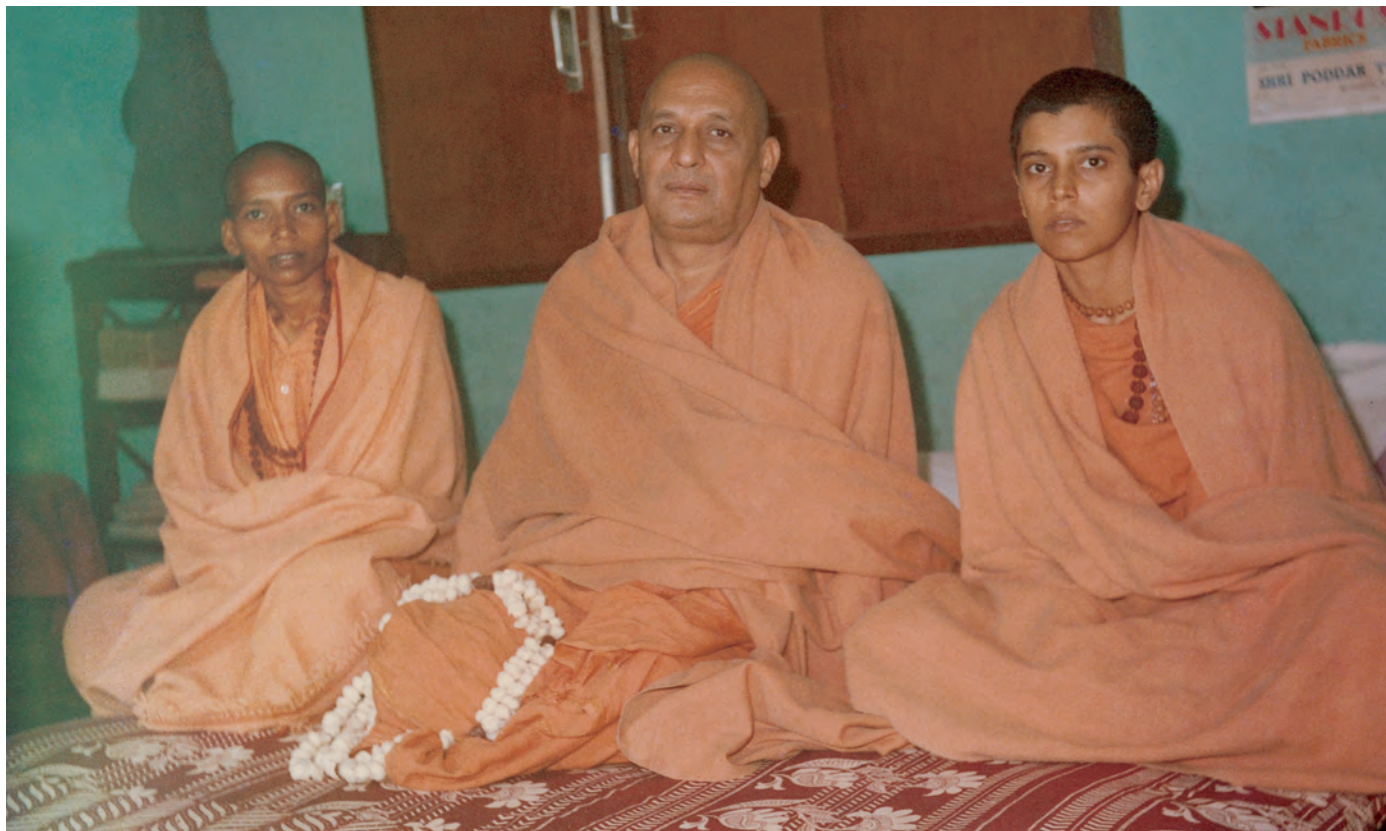
Sri Swamiji returned to India and travelled to New Delhi, Dhanbad, Rajnandgaon, Athnair, Agra and Gondia for yoga shivirs. He then inaugurated a seminar in Sambalpur.

November–December

Sri Swamiji travelled to Santa Domingo in the Caribbean, then to Puerto Rico for the International Yoga Teachers Association (IYTA) Convention. He gave the opening address and emphasized the scientific basis of yoga, urging yoga teachers to be mindful of this aspect. He conducted a yoga program in Pointe-a-Pitre before returning to Santo Domingo and travelling to Medellin.

Swami Nityabodhananda conducted a yoga shivir at the yoga centre in Jamshedpur and at Hindustan Copper Ltd in Ghatshila.

Sri Swamiji returned to India and in December inaugurated the National Yoga Convention in Thane.



Winter had spread its mantle over Ganga Darshan when I had the last conversation with my young friend. The roses were once again in full bloom. On this day, the night fog had lifted and the sun warmed our hearts. Sitting on the lawns working on the draft for this book, I watched him fix the large, colourful beach umbrella for Swami Niranjan to sit under. From being a naïve visitor, he had become an involved, devoted ashramite. Something had come full circle.

After finishing the task, he smilingly held the words to me, “Nineteen eighty-two?”

“Laughingly reflecting on the journeys made in the ashram, I replied, “Yes, 1982. The final chapter of this volume. That was a defining year in the history of Bihar School of Yoga. Sri Swamiji spent much of the time touring either overseas or within India. Experienced disciples had been working steadily at their overseas postings, and in many countries ashrams and teaching centres had sprung up.

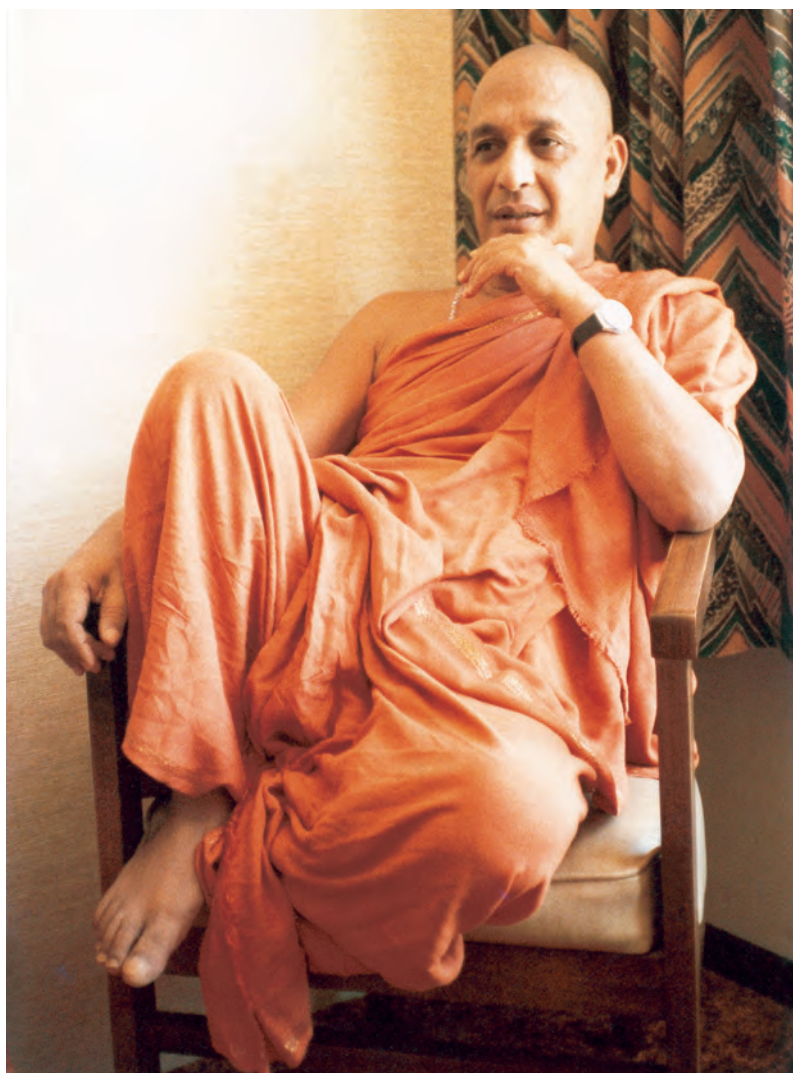
“In India, virtually every state had centres affiliated with BSY. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Maharashtra especially had well-trained swamis in residential ashrams, who imparted the training of yoga in their regions. At BSY large groups of students from all over India and the world were welcomed and their courses were taught by the resident swamis.”

“Yoga had truly been spread from door to door and shore to shore. Swami Satyananda had accomplished the mandate given to him by his guru.”

“In November this year, during his trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico, Sri Swamiji called Swami Niranjan over and instructed him to return to BSY to take over the responsibilities. A chapter was over, and a new one was about to begin.”

“What did this mean?” asked my fellow ashramite in freshly shaven head and geru clothes.

“Who can say what the actions of enlightened beings mean!” I did not dare to frame a reply to this query. “The final word can come only from the gurus. Let us hear what Sri Swamiji said about the course of these events.”



Guru's will

"You should understand that the work of Bihar School of Yoga is not an outcome of my intelligence, my efforts, my experience or anything that belongs to me. It is because of the instructions and the guidance that Swami Sivananda whispers to me from time to time. It is a direct inspiration of guru. It is according to his command and revelation. I am constantly in touch with his invisible spirit. It is not just faith, but a fact.



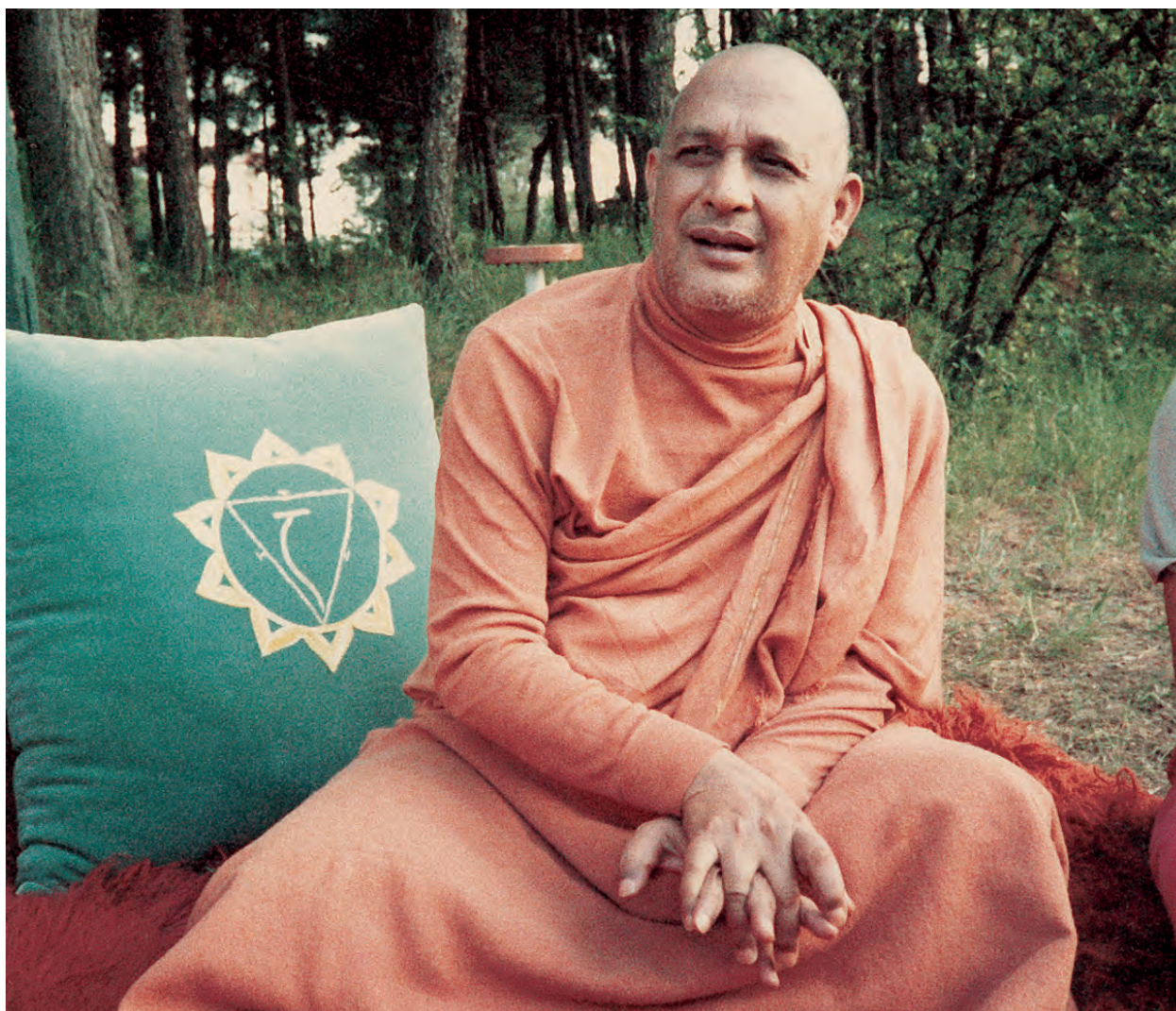
I receive very clear guidance; I hear him speaking; I hear him telling me what to do. That is the reason I have been able to take yoga to every corner of the world and push through every section of society. I can say without any pride that the work that the Bihar School of Yoga has done will shape history.

I never surrendered my loyalty to anything, but there is one person in my life who has permeated my consciousness through and through, and

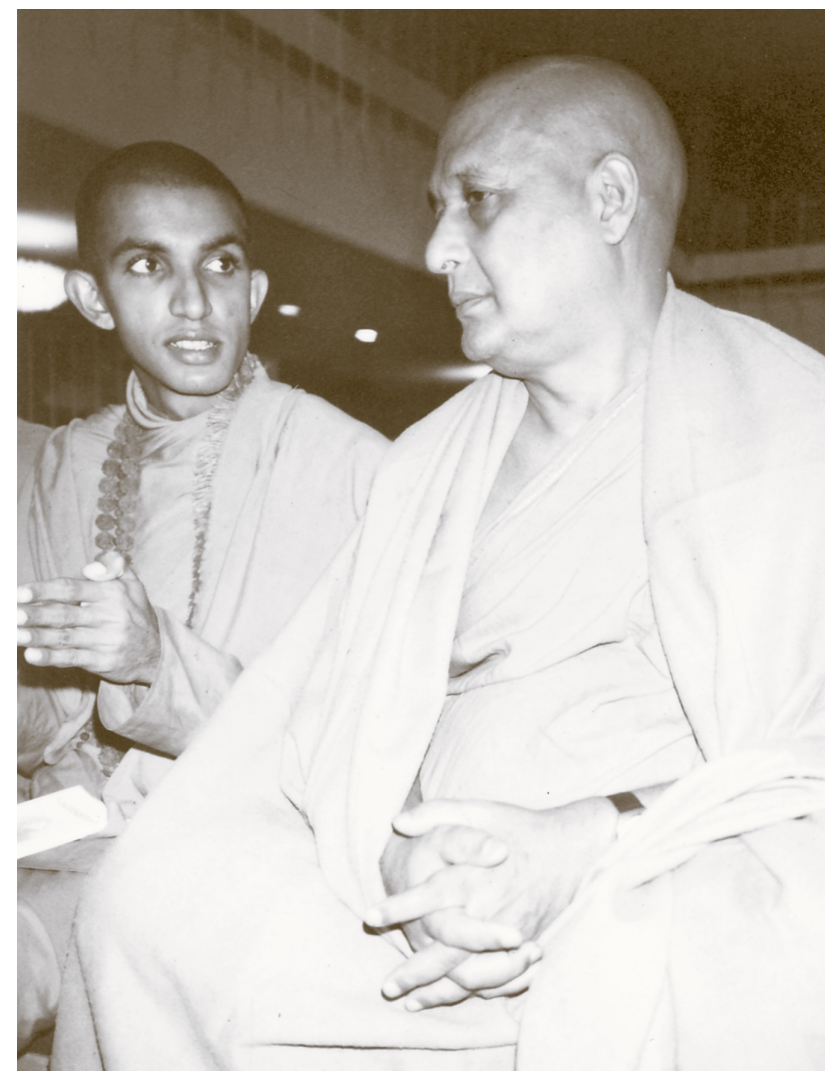
this is my guru. The purpose of surrender is to become an efficient instrument of the guru on all levels. If the disciple's surrender is complete, when the guru tells him, "This will happen through you," it happens. The guru can work wonders through the disciple who has totally surrendered.

A guru may leave his body, but he will continue to live in the heart of every disciple. His spirit lives forever if the disciple can remain in tune with him. Then he guides him at all times, in thought and emotion, and in actual life. Disciples may go away but the guru's grace follows them. I do not feel that I have done anything because my simple philosophy is that everything is an expression of guru's will. If you are a disciple, you should be dedicated and devoted to your guru. And you should direct your effort and endeavour to carrying out and furthering his work, whatever it may be. For you are merely an extension of your guru, in body, mind and consciousness.

In November 1982 I felt Swami Sivananda's presence in Puerto Rico. He said, 'You are now free from your ashram life,' and thereby released me. I called Swami Niranjan and said, 'Now my plan is clear. I am not going to work any more with the administrative side of BSY or any institution. Return to Munger as soon as possible.' I chose him when he came to me at the age of four and trained him without telling him that he would succeed me.



In the beginning the movement is the means and the philosophy the end, but later the institution becomes the end and the philosophy the means. That happens with all religions, all institutions. We live just to make the organization or institution survive. A sannyasin should be beyond institutions and religions. For him, all spiritual institutions are a part of his soul and every religion is equally precious, important and meaningful.



During the coming twenty years, I will work for the good of mankind and my sadhana. Personally, I consider even yoga to be a means rather than an end. I have been thinking for many years that when people attain success, eminence and power, they forget the purpose. Instead of working for mankind, they work for themselves. We must work for yoga only as far as we can convince people

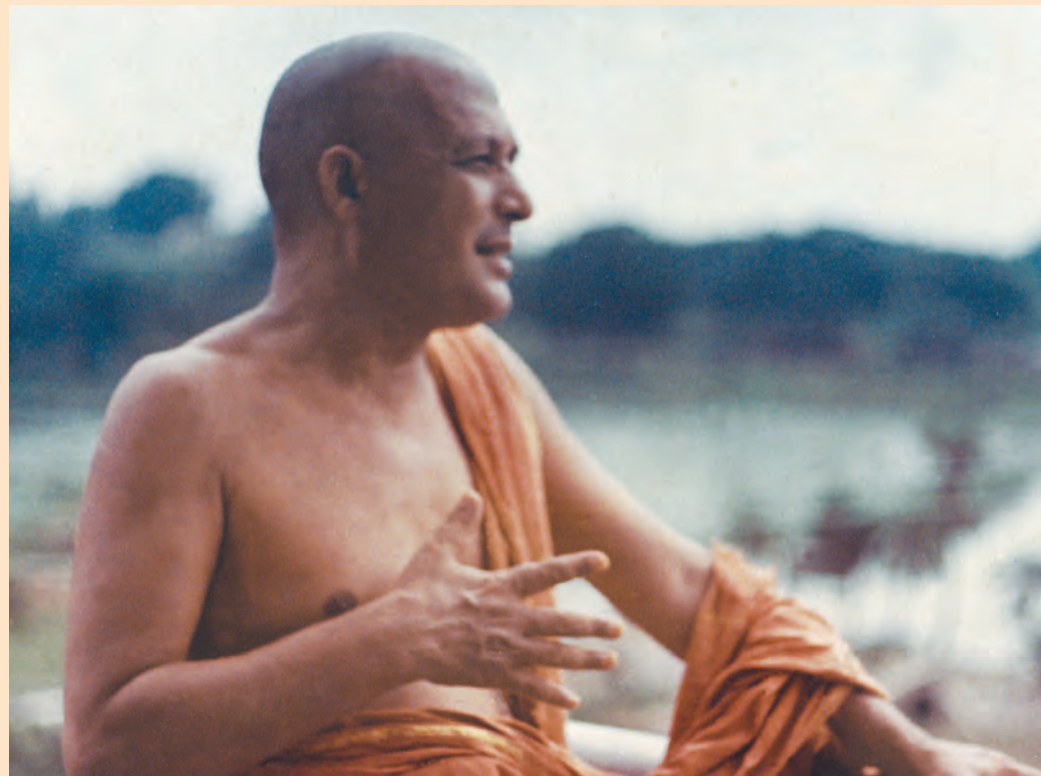
*that it can help them. We have to propagate a particular philosophy or science only to the extent that people can be benefited by it, but if we forget that the good of mankind in general is the goal, not the teaching itself, then we have made a great mistake. **In my life, I have accomplished what I set out to do by the grace of my guru.***"

Yoga for Spiritual Transformation

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

The guru's instruction to the sannyasin is: "Keep moving for the good of many." This is how the message of yoga is being revived and carried all round the globe. Its acceptance by people in every quarter of life from family to business or from social to personal is gaining greater momentum, aided by the many recent scientific discoveries supporting the age-old theories of yogic sadhana.

Originally yoga was meant to liberate humankind from the pain of bondage. Eventually, however, it became the creed of a select few. Now things are again changing and it is time for you to understand yoga in the context of your own life. From the results of a vast amount of research carried out within the last few decades, we have come to realize that yoga is for the person who is actively involved in day-to-day living.



Until recently the majority of people did not practise yoga although they retained a respect for it. For some, yoga meant the practice of hatha yoga. For others, it was just sitting down quietly in a steady and tranquil position in dhyana. While for others, it was a life of mendicancy. Now, however, many have had personal experience of the good that yoga does. People in India have always known that yoga can lead the individual to freedom. It is not necessary to go to the heights of loneliness and rigours in the Himalayas. We don't have to abandon the normal and natural course of life to experience yoga.

In recent years we have been working on the possibility of creating a yogic culture on a greater scale. The whole of mankind, irrespective of affiliations to religion, language or nationality, can have one culture which is an expression of the individual's spirit and inner attitude towards life and its problems. We have to understand the word culture in relation to the Sanskrit word *samskriti*. When man is unhappy and suffering from anxiety and neurosis, he has lost touch with the real culture within himself. His culture should include the greater aspect of human personality. This is not intellectual, mental or emotional culture. It goes much deeper into the centre of man's existence. This is the concept of *samskriti*.

For many years I lived with my guru Swami Sivananda in the Rishikesh ashram and had the divine opportunity to serve him. During this period I had time to reflect on matters of body, mind and spirit. After I left the ashram I wandered all over India, Nepal, Afghanistan, Burma and Sri Lanka on foot, by rail or bullock cart. I realized then that it was necessary for every individual to follow a path. It is not that people do not need faith or belief, they do, but today they need something more than that. Yoga can fulfil this long sought after need. Yoga is one of the holiest mantras of humanity and it is going to be the foundation of future world communities. It is a culture for humanity. It is a culture for everyone, for those who believe in God and also for those who don't.

We have broken the confines of yoga from mysticism and philosophy to a practical application of the techniques in daily life. The practices of yoga have only one aim. Some declare it is to cure disease. Others believe it develops the mental faculties by increasing the ability to concentrate. In fact, research conducted in countries all over the world has proven that *yogasana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *mudra*, *bandha*, *dharana* and *dhyana* can definitely relieve man's physical and mental disturbances. However, the ultimate purpose of yoga is to awaken *sushumna nadi*, the central energy flow in the spine which conducts the spiritual energy. With the awakening of *sushumna*, the problems of an individual come to an end.

The academic definition of yoga is union of prana and apana in manipura chakra or the union of ida and pingala in ajna chakra. All other definitions have arisen only to help people understand this basic concept. In the physical body there are two realities or universal elements known as prana and chitta. *Prana* is the vital force or life force, and *chitta* is the mental force. Man is a combination of both. When these two energies are in balance, there is harmony in life. Imbalance results in disturbances throughout the mind and body in the form of disease. In Samkhya these two forces are known as Purusha and Prakriti. In tantra we know them as Shiva and Shakti, and in yoga as ida and pingala or Ganga and Yamuna. The origin of ida and pingala is in mooladhara chakra and their final union takes place in ajna chakra.

Mooladhara chakra is also the origin of sushumna nadi, which usually lies totally inactive. It lies dormant in a state of eternal sleep, empowered by the all-pervading tamoguna. Therefore, it is given the symbol of a snake in eternal nidra. Sushumna is the force responsible for the awakening of higher consciousness, and with its awakening the higher brain centres, which are normally inactive, come into operation. For centuries, as human beings, we have been trying to bring these more subtle forces into operation. This is what we call evolution.

We are not just static creatures born to eat, drink, live and die. Where have we come from and where are we going? As Lord Krishna said to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita* (4:5): "Many lives have gone by and many lives will come again," because evolution is an unending process. There is nothing in this universe which is not evolving. Matter is evolving and undergoing constant change even in the realm of physics. The mind is a higher matter, which is also undergoing a constant, natural and systematic transformation from year to year, from age to age.

In Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* it is written: "By the overflow of natural potentiality occurs the transformation from one substance into another." There will come a time when mind and matter will undergo an ultimate transformation of matter into spirit. Matter is the base and within it lies a dormant energy. Fundamental change is not brought about from outside; it is inherent in the material. Mind can be transformed into



higher consciousness only because the potentiality or atman is already present. Only *avidya*, ignorance, needs to be removed.

By a process of transformation of chitta, through continued sadhana, the material obstructions and manifestations of energy which prevent one from knowing one's true nature are removed and there is an explosion of *shakti*, energy. Chitta and prana must undergo this process of evolution life after life until shakti emerges

from it. This is the central theme of yoga. It is through the practices of yoga that one can speed up this change from *avidya* to pure knowledge. Yogic sadhana helps to remove the obstacles in the way of Prakriti, to bring about a transformation in the order of consciousness. When the whole structure of chitta becomes completely purified, Purusha functions independently without any hindrance from the mind or the external world. This spiritual transformation is the goal of yoga.

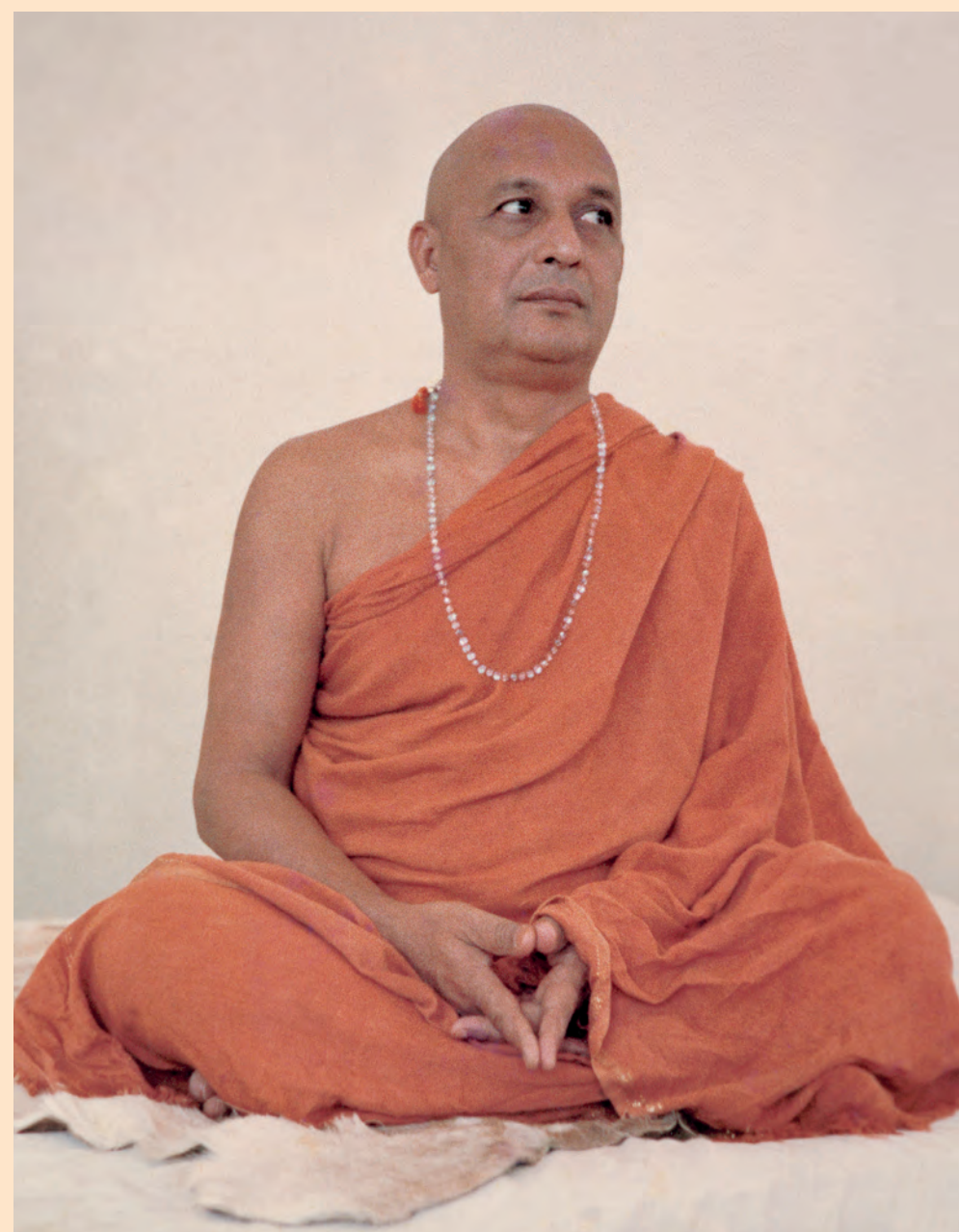
Mahashakti, which is present in every being, is known as sushumna, kundalini, Durga, Bhavani, Kali. With the awakening of sushumna, matter becomes subservient and energy becomes supreme. We live our life with matter controlling shakti, and this gross matter is so powerful that it controls not only our life, but also our spirit and thoughts. It is time now for us to turn the tables. Shakti must become the master and ride over matter as symbolized by the depiction of an awakened Kali standing over the helpless Shiva. Kali represents the awakened sushumna or Shakti and Shiva symbolizes matter. The sole purpose of all the yogic practices is to awaken this powerful sushumna nadi. It is with this purpose that the rishis and munis experimented for centuries, trying to discover the way to evolve from the individual's limited conditioning. Thus all the practices of yoga, whether asana, pranayama, mudra, bandha, mantra, pratyahara, dharana or dhyana, are intended for the awakening of sushumna. It is for this reason that tapasvis perform austerities, tantrics practise tantra, raja yogis practise meditation, hatha yogis purify the nadis, karma yogis purify the chitta and jnana yogis contemplate the nature of atman and the self. It is only for the awakening of sushumna that people indulge in sexual life because the pleasure derived from sexual life is just a glimpse of that higher bliss.

The awakening of sushumna will activate the larger part of the brain, which has not been utilized up to now. Man uses only a very

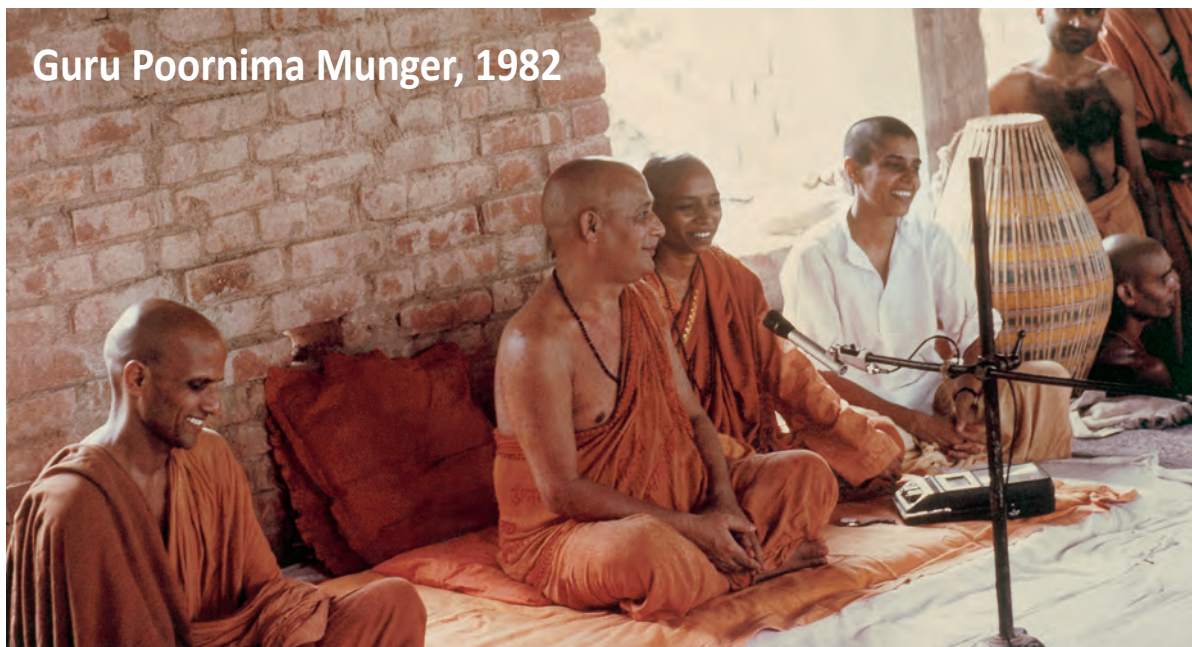
small portion of his total potential. He does not even fully understand the functions of the brain. Until now man has not ascertained whether there is a brain capable of perception beyond matter. It is this aspect of yoga which must be given prime importance. Relief from diseases, even severe and chronic disorders, and improvement in one's mental capacities are only side products. If you practise yoga for the awakening of sushumna, I can assure you that all your pain and tribulations will come to an end. The chain of pain will break somewhere. If you practise yoga only for the sake of removing your diseases, it will achieve that, but it will not remove the limitations from your life.

I like to think about yoga and I like to talk about it, but more than that, I want to see its realization. Yoga has to do with an evolved state of mind. In the same way as you develop your body with nutritional food, the practices of yoga can develop your mind from its present, gross state to a more subtle, refined level of being. A time has to come when man must change his base of existence and activity. Rather than operating in this world through a narrow frame of mind, let him operate, live and think from a higher field of consciousness.

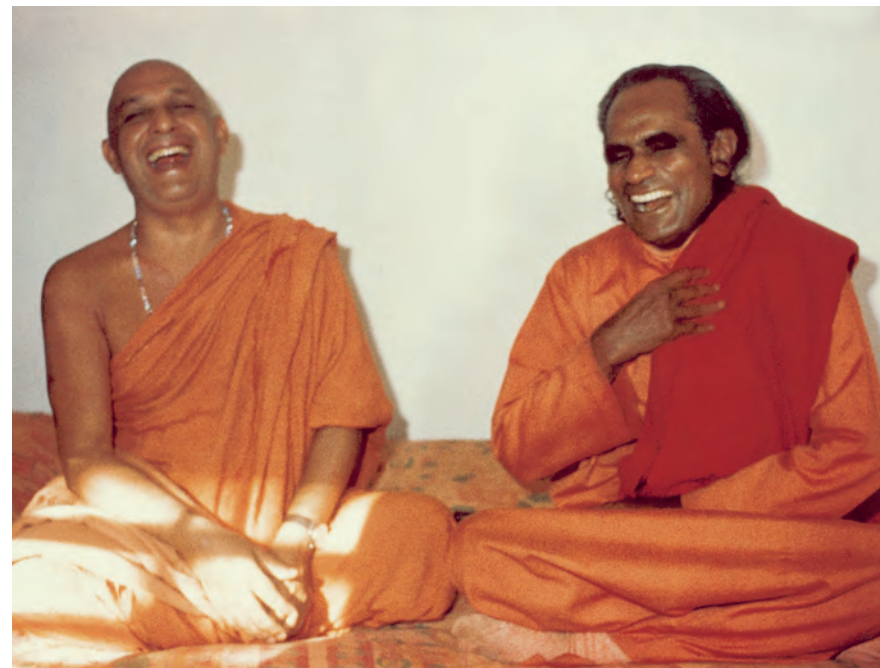
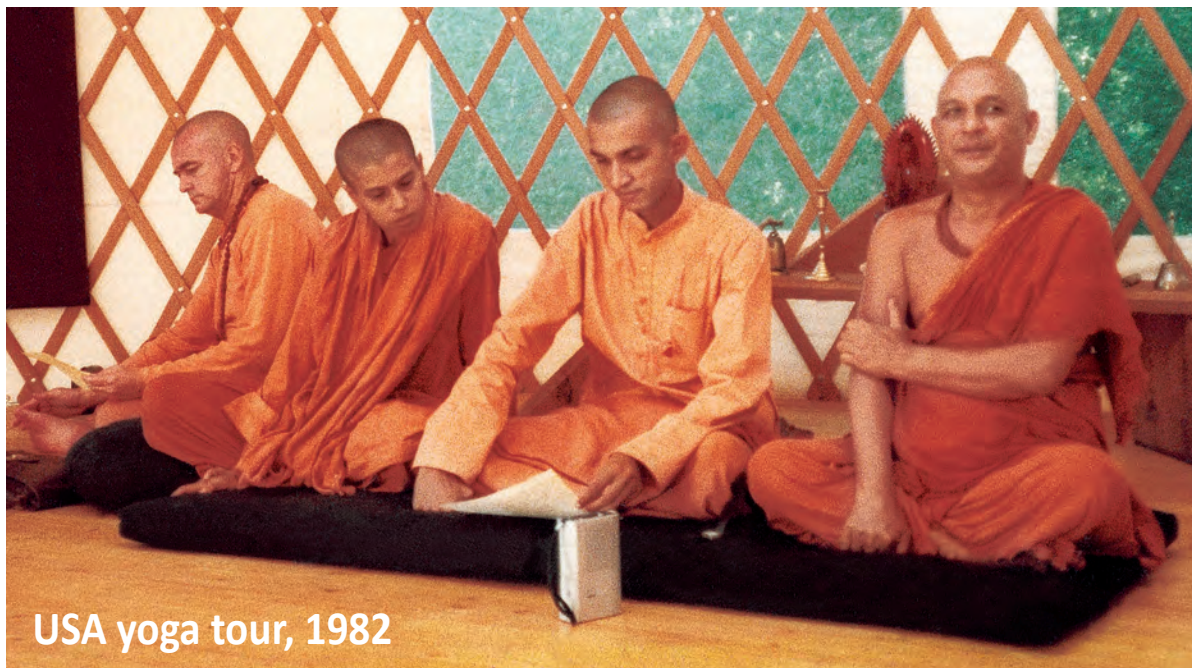
Yoga is a science; it is not just a faith. People are now witnessing the dawning of a new era. We shall see the day when the light of yoga becomes the inspiration for all of us. Then the sankalpa of our sannyasins will be realized: "Yoga for oneself and yoga for all." ॐ



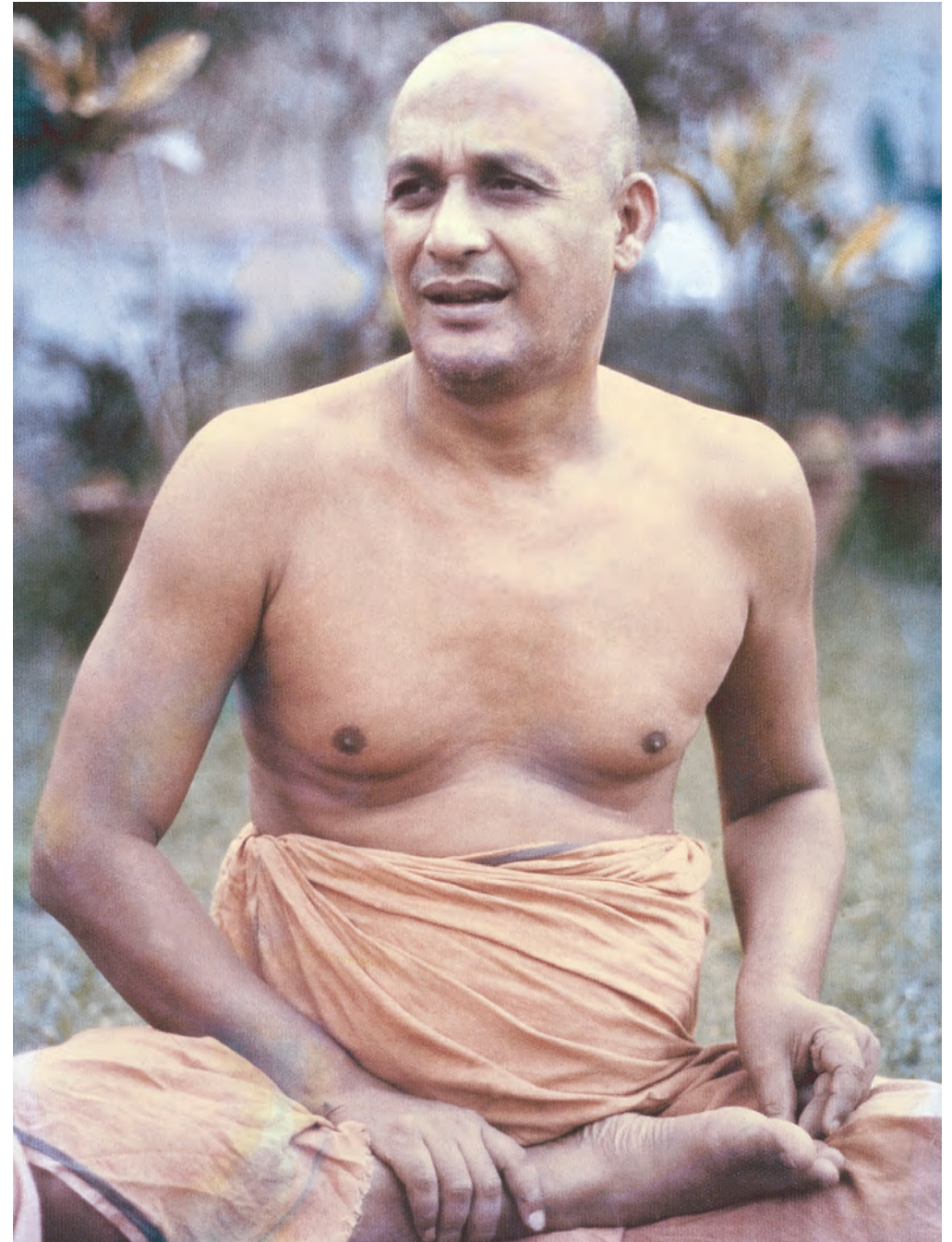
Guru Poornima Munger, 1982

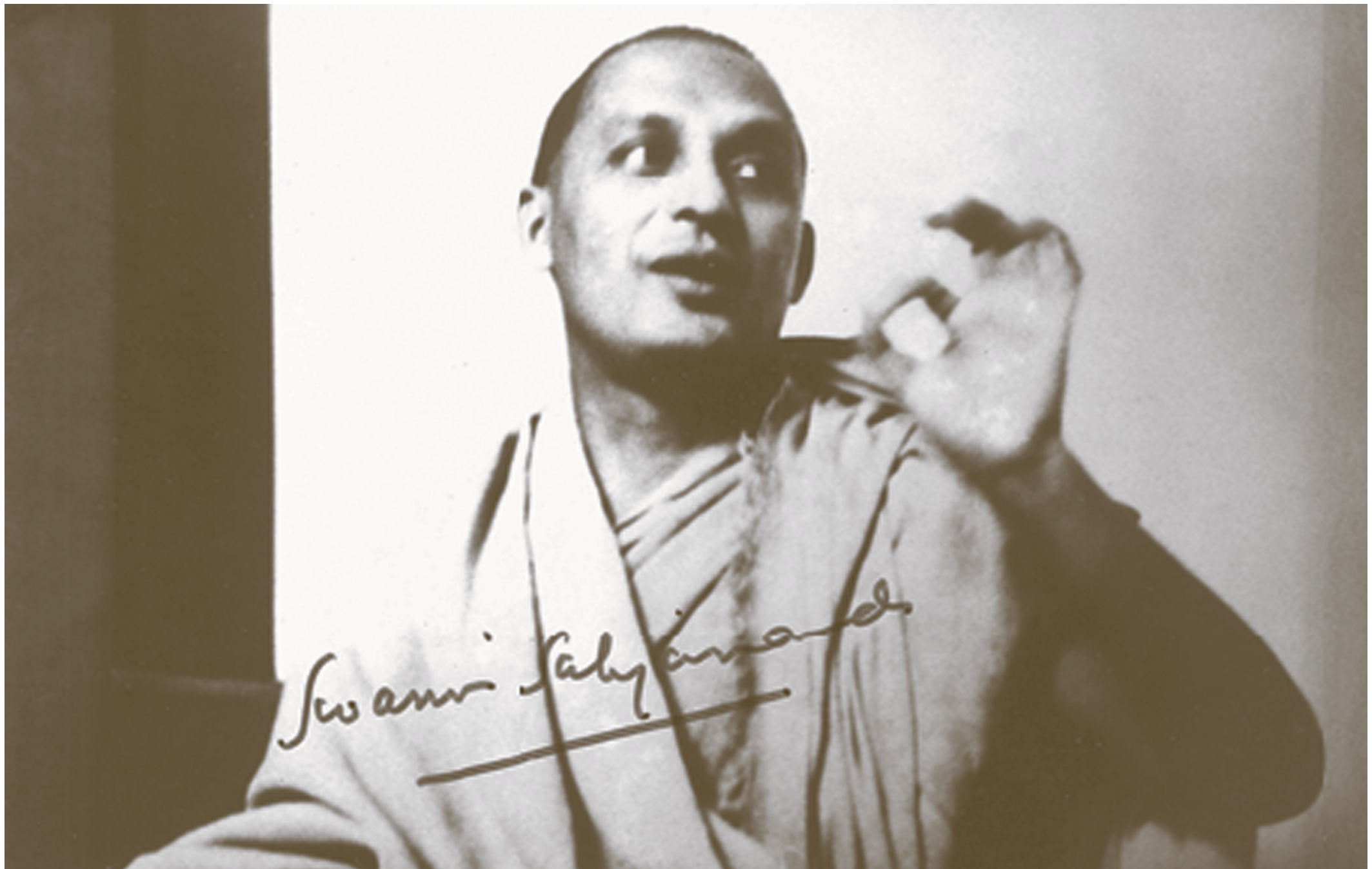


USA yoga tour, 1982



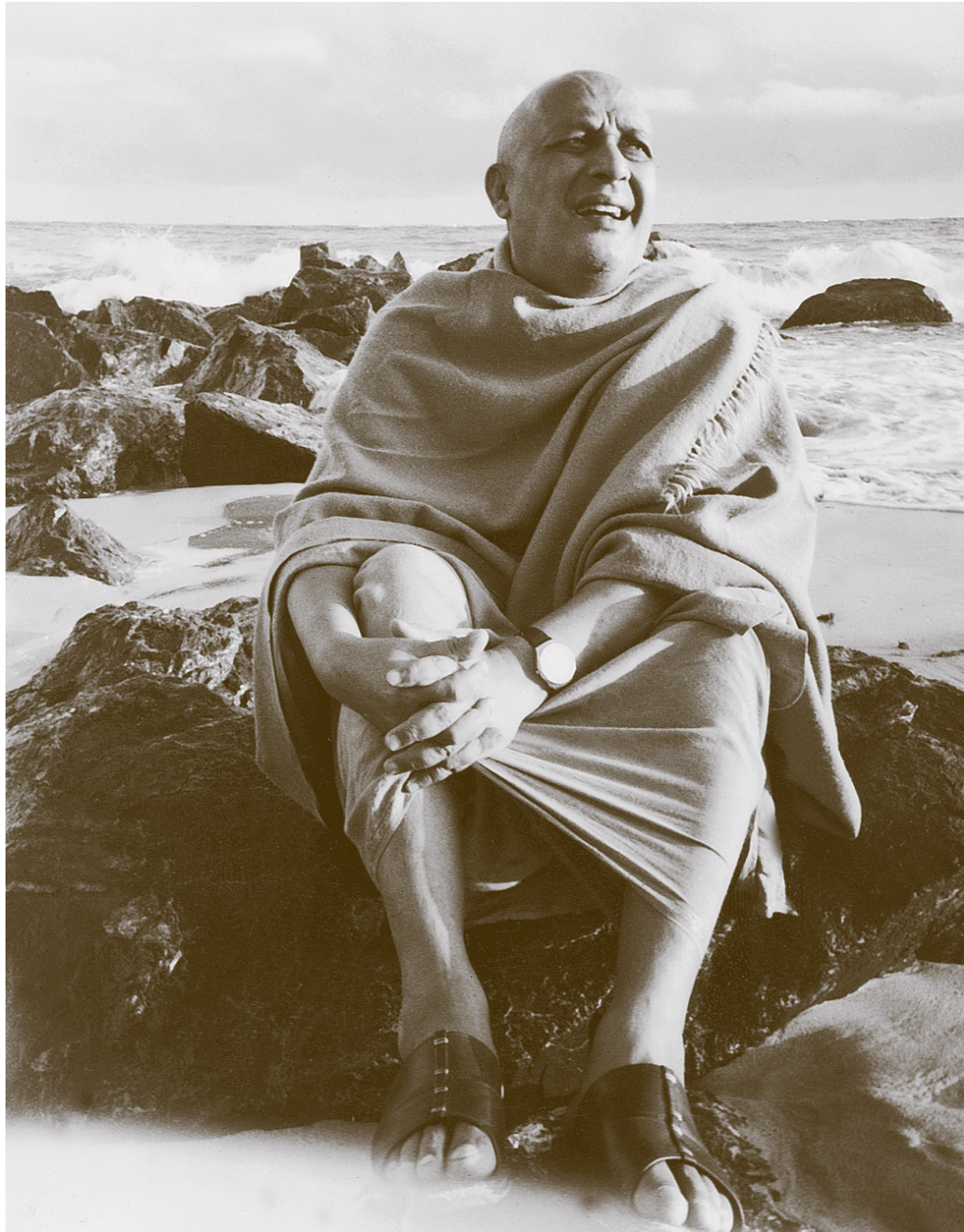












Swami Satyananda Saraswati — 1983-2007



From 1963 to 1983, Swami Satyananda worked tirelessly to spread the message of yoga. He also trained a core of sannyasins to transmit the yogic techniques for different needs and cultures, and they established many Satyananda Yoga ashrams, schools and centres around India and the world.

By 1983, Bihar School of Yoga was well established and recognized throughout the world as a reputed and authentic centre for learning yoga and the spiritual sciences. More than that, yoga had moved out of the caves of hermits and ascetics in to the

mainstream of society. Whether in hospitals, jails, schools, colleges, business houses, the sporting and fashion arenas, the army or navy, yoga was in demand. Scientific research into yogic techniques was being conducted all over the world. Professionals such as lawyers, engineers, doctors, business magnates and professors were incorporating yoga into their lives. So too were the masses. Yoga had become a household word.

Due to his tremendous zeal and energy, in the short span of twenty years, Sri Swamiji had fulfilled the mandate of his guru. And now, at the peak of his accomplishment, he renounced all that he created. He appointed Swami Niranjanananda as his successor and gave him the mandate to continue the work, and then began to gradually withdraw from the teaching and administering of the yoga movement. In 1988 Sri Swamiji renounced disciples, establishments and institutions, and departed from Munger, never to return again. He went on a pilgrimage through the *siddha teerthas* (spiritual centres) of India as

a mendicant, without any personal belonging or assistance from the ashram or institutions he had founded.

At Trayambakeshwar, before the jyotirlingam of Lord Mrityunjaya, his ishta devata, he renounced his garb and lived as an avadhoota. And here, at the source of the Godavari River near Neel Parbat, while performing chaturmas anushtana, his future place of abode and sadhana were revealed to him. He received the mandate for a new mission, to progress toward the cosmic dimension through unbroken remembrance and repetition of the Lord's name with every breath. On 8th September, 1989, birthday of his guru Swami Sivananda, he heard the voice loud and clear, "Chitabhoomi", and saw a vision of the place where he was intended to go.

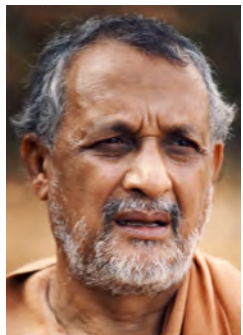
Swami Satyananda did not choose Rikhia, it was chosen for him. After leaving Munger, while roaming the length and breadth of India, he came across many beautiful places where he was invited to take up residence. But in keeping with his style of surrender he awaited the mandate of his ishta and guru, which guided him to the small nondescript, unknown village of Rikhia, on the outskirts of Baba Baidyanath Dham in Deoghar (Jharkhand), the chitabhoomi or cremation ground of Sati, consort of Shiva.

Sri Swamiji arrived at Rikhia on 23rd September 1989, at mid-day, the day of vernal equinox, when nature is in perfect balance as the day and night are equal. Soon after, he lit a dhuni or fire and called it Mahakal Chita Dhuni. Lighting a dhuni is a very ancient

tradition among sadhus. It is believed that the ash from a sadhu's dhuni is very potent, for his entire day is spent in front of the dhuni and all his acts are performed with the fire as witness.

The Rikhia that Swami Satyananda arrived in was still living in the sixteenth century. There were no roads, electricity, telephones, newspapers, television or shops. However, its vibrations were pure and spiritual providing an ideal climate for the seclusion which he imposed on himself. He began a life of intensive spiritual practice, entering the lifestyle of paramahansas who do not work for their flock and mission alone, but have a universal vision. His first anushtana commenced in 1989 during Ashwin Navaratri – the performance of ashtottar-shat-laksh (108 lakh) mantra purascharana which took him three hundred days to complete. He gave up the geru cloth and donned the *kaupen*, loin cloth, an important hallmark in the life of a sadhu denoting that vairagya and dispassion are an inherent part of his being. He no longer associated with any institutions, nor gave diksha, upadesha or received dakshina, but remained in seclusion and sadhana.

In a conclusive message, he told all, "I have nothing more to say to anyone and no further guidance to give. For over twenty years I have lived with the people answering their questions and helping them on their spiritual path. Now I withdraw my responsibility. Those who are receptive, they will surely benefit from what I have told them, but those who are not, they will now have to find their own way."



In 1990 he designated the sadhana sthal as Sri Panch Dashnam Paramahansa Alakh Bara, denoting it as a place where a sannyasin who has perfected himself consolidates his learning and gives it momentum to attain greater spiritual heights. The *ishta devi*, presiding goddess, of the akhara was established as Tulsi Ma, the benevolent force presiding over all spheres. Now Sri Swamiji undertook the vow of *panchagni*, the five-fire austerity, in which he performed higher sadhanas sitting before five blazing fires outdoors during the hottest months of the year. The vow culminated in 1998. The fire lit by Sri Swamiji is still burning at Rikhiapeeth and is worshipped daily at sunrise and sunset with aromatic herbs amidst the chanting of vedic mantras.

In 1991, Swami Satyananda received another divine mandate: "Take care of your neighbours as I have taken care of you." Seeking to strike a balance between the personal aspect of spiritual liberation and the social aspect of helping others, he gave Swami Niranjanananda a new task for Sivananda Math: service to and improvement of the living conditions of the tribal people in the thousands of villages surrounding Rikhiadham. Thus, from 1991 onwards, Sivananda Math undertook to finance and construct homes for the homeless, provide for clean drinking water, essential medical facilities, free clothing and household items. In the second phase of assistance, means of sustainable livelihood were provided.

In 1994, in a month-long darshan, Sri Swamiji gave a new message, of bhakti yoga. He said that the purpose of

human life is to realize God through love and to serve God by helping humanity. He prophesied that while hatha yoga and raja yoga were the panacea of the twentieth century, devotion to God and bhakti yoga would be the panacea of the twenty-first.

In 1995, Sri Swamiji held the first Sat Chandi Maha Yajna, invoking the Cosmic Mother through a tantric ceremony hitherto not witnessed by common people. During this event, Sri Swamiji also passed on his spiritual and sannyasa sankalpa to Swami Niranjanananda.

In 1996, the annual event included Rama Naam Aradhana and Sita-Rama Vivaha, and in 1997, Sri Swamiji declared it as Sita Kalyanam. In 2001, for the first time he revealed that the yajna was part of the 12-year Rajasooya Yajna, a ceremony that is traditionally performed by a conqueror.

"I am performing the Rajasooya Yajna not as a conqueror of land, wealth or people, but because I was able to establish an empire of yoga, which is the need of today in our civilization," said Sri Swamiji. "Yoga works at the spiritual, mental and physical levels to improve the quality of life, and that is also the concept of prosperity in today's society. We have wealth, but we lack quality of life and peace of mind. I am performing the Rajasooya Yajna to re-establish peace of mind, to re-equip people with the riches of contentment, happiness, joy and well-being."

In 1998, Sri Swamiji also inspired Sivananda Math to undertake an education project. Thus scholarships were given to deserving students of Rikhia panchayat with special emphasis on the education of girls. English classes

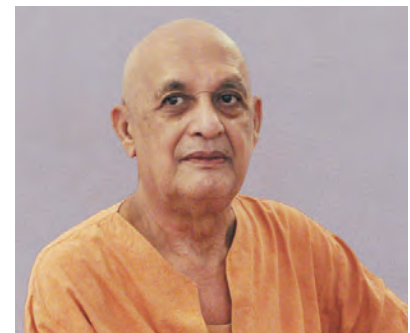
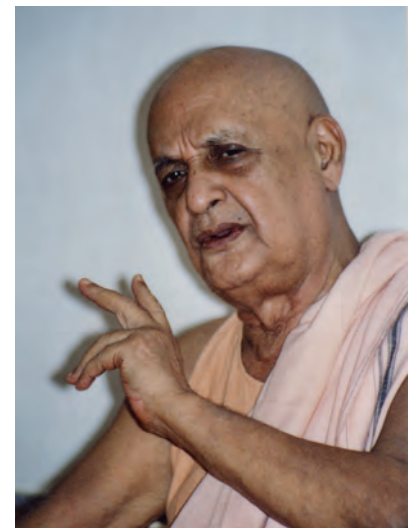
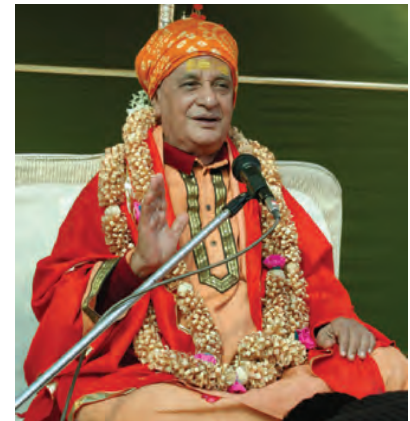
were also started at the ashram. By 2001, nearly all eligible children aged between 6-12 years of Rikhia Panchayat had been adopted into the ever-expanding family of Swami Satyananda. In 2003, computer training was started. The girls, called kanyas, were also taught chanting of Sanskrit stotras. The boys, batuks, were simultaneously introduced to Gayatri mantra, Bhagavad Gita, surya namaskara, and rituals of havan and worship. Today these little children confidently conduct all the ceremonies and rituals at Rikhiapeeth before thousands of devotees who come to participate in these events.

In 2004, Sivananda Ashram was formed with the main thrust of looking after the elderly and infirm, including widows. It has also undertaken a project to provide one wholesome meal a day to the children and elderly of Rikhia panchayat.

Thus, in a short span of time, a silent revolution has taken place in Rikhia. It was all made possible by a sannyasin who came to this place to live in solitude. Sri Swamiji says, "After coming to Rikhia my cataracted vision was corrected. I have lived a spiritual life for more than sixty years. I have practised every form of yoga, but ultimately I found that when I began to

think about others, God began to think about me. On my guru's instructions, I lit the flame of yoga in Munger and the light of seva in Rikhia. This is the requirement of humanity today."

In 2007, Sri Swamiji announced the formation of Rikhiapeeth. He said, "The Rikhia ashram will now be known as Rikhiapeeth. *Peeth* means 'seat', an apt term for Rikhia as the instructions given to me by Swami Sivananda have culminated and fructified here. Rikhia is an ashram in the original sense of the word because here a lifestyle is lived. Swami Satyasangananda is the Peethadhishwari of Rikhiapeeth and has been given the sankalpa that the three cardinal teachings of Swami Sivananda, serve, love and give, will be practised and lived here. This is the future vision of Rikhiapeeth."





Tributes to Swami Satyananda Saraswati

He is a man of profound intelligence, charm and good humour, and can explain in simple, scientific terms, the value of the practice of yoga to our everyday life.

The Guardian
22nd February, 1984

देश की संस्कृति विकेन्द्रीकृत होती जा रही है। इस वैज्ञानिक और भौतिकवादी युग में स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी का योग आन्दोलन सुदृढ़ आधारशिला है। भगवान् चन्द्रमौलेश्वर का आशीर्ष इन्हें प्राप्त है।

- जगतगुरु श्री अभिनव विद्यातीर्थ, शंकराचार्य श्रृंगेरीमठ

How does one pay a tribute to a multi-faceted spiritual diamond that dazzles, creating an astonishing pattern of ever-new beauty and eternal glory?

We grew up together at the lotus-like feet of Gurudev Swami Sivananda Maharaj. Yet, Swami Satyanandaji Maharaj was always someone special. Whatever he touched turned into pure gold. In the ashram at Rishikesh, there was not a single department of activity that Swami Satyanandaji Maharaj did not handle, and handle with extraordinary ability, dedication and devotion. His sadhana was integral; his siddhi is therefore perfection itself.



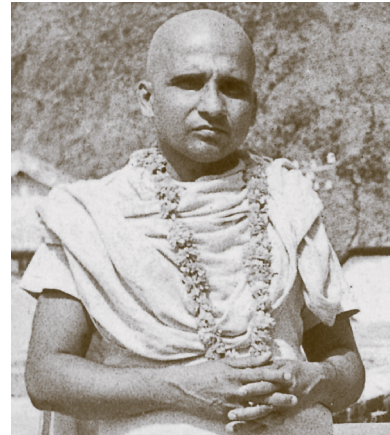
Satyananda shone with Brahmatejas. The Brahma Srotriya that he was before his holy initiation shone with the resplendence of a Brahma Nishtha. To the innate qualities of viveka (discrimination) and panditya (learning) was added jnana; in his affectionate heart came to dwell cosmic love; into his searching eyes entered equal vision; his questioning mind questioned itself out of existence and in its place Swami Satyanandaji realized the Truth, the substratum of all being.

He is an all-rounder; he can deliver fiery lectures in English, Hindi and Sanskrit. He is a linguist. He can sing kirtans very nicely. He composes thrilling songs. He is an artist too. He is an adept in hatha yoga and a master of raja yoga. His life itself is a lesson in karma yoga. Every word he speaks is the highest Vedanta, in practical form. He is a great titikshu (seeker).

Today, he shines as the golden light of yoga, and this light shines in the hearts of thousands upon thousands all over the world: they who have met him have been completely transformed, and they who have heard of him from his devotees have only one desire, to have his darshan, and all of them are whole-heartedly dedicated to yoga.

"May Swami Satyanandaji live long!" is the prayer that every heart sings.

Swami Venkatesananda
Mauritius



Swami Satyanandaji has the qualities of a disciple whose sole duty is to obey implicitly the words of the guru and speak not of his own personality in any way. . . He combines within himself the attitudes of a realist and an idealist. In action he is a realist; in thought he is an idealist. He follows the dictum of Sri Shankara: Bhaavaadwaitam sadaa Kuryaat Kriyaad waitam sadaa na hi – one should be a non-dualist in feeling but not in physical action. Swami Satyanandaji has devoted his life for holding aloft the brilliant torch of the ancient glory of tyaga and sannyasa.

Swami Krishnananda
Secretary, Divine Life Society, Rishikesh

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती का योग आन्दोलन देहरी पर जलने वाले दीप की तरह है जो अन्दर तो प्रकाश देता ही है, बाहर भी आलोकित कर देता है।

- स्वामी आत्मानन्दजी, रामकृष्ण मिशन रायपुर

He is always ready to help others. There is no question of day and night. At any time you can ask him to do any service for you, but there is no pride of seva in him.

If you meet him he will make you burst with laughter and at the same time he will give you the best wisdom of the Gita, Vedas and other religious books.

Sri Sivananda-Shanti
Dehradun

स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के पवित्र व उपयोगी कार्य का स्वागत है। आप योग द्वारा राष्ट्र की सेवा में सफल होंगे।

- श्री हनुमान प्रसाद पोट्टार, गोरखपुर

योग प्रचार के लिए स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती का त्यागमय जीवन, दृढ़ संकल्प सराहनीय है, सच्चिदानन्द स्वरूप वे स्वयं हैं, वे जगतगुरु हैं।

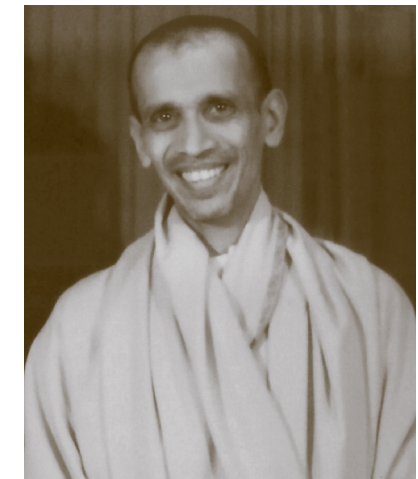
- स्वामी बाबा सीताराम दास, जी मंडला
(153 वर्षीय सन्त)

Sri Swami Satyananda is a rare combination of mighty head, powerful hand and soft heart, a brilliant member in the adhyatmic circle of Sri Swami Sivananda Maharaj, pledged to further his master's mission of disseminating, by practice and by precept, the spiritual wealth of jnana, bhakti, yoga and seva, for the re-establishment of peace, love and bliss upon earth.

Swami Chidananda
President, Divine Life Society, Rishikesh

प्रकाश ही सत्य है, स्थूल सूक्ष्म और कारण को समझाते हुए स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के कार्य की सराहना करता हूँ।

- स्वामी चिदानन्द महाराज



Swami Satyananda culminated his own process of understanding human behaviour and nature by putting together a practical system of scientific yoga methods, whose branches were suitable for people with every conceivable type of problem, need or aspiration.

He is like a great river arising from the Himalayas, going miles and miles carrying the message of yoga. Swami Satyanandaji is a great flow of knowledge spreading Gurudev's holy upadesha far and wide.

Dr. Sri B. G. Adhvaryoo M.B.B.S., D.O.
Bombay

Yoga is pre-eminently a path of self-control and self-conquest. In its practical form it has enabled countless people to achieve physical fitness and mental alertness. Swami Satyananda has made important contributions to the cause of yoga.

Indira Gandhi
Late Prime Minister of India



योग आत्मनियंत्रण का वह मार्ग है, जिसके द्वारा मनुष्य मानसिक और शारीरिक हित की स्वस्थ उपलब्धि कर सकता है। स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के योग अधिवेशन की सफलता के लिए मेरी हार्दिक शुभकामना है।

- श्रीमती इंदिरा गाँधी

ऋषियों ने जो कुछ भी मानव को दिया है, साधना-तपस्या के आधार पर दिया है। इन तथ्यों को व्यावहारिक रूप से सिखाने वाले स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी जो सिखायेंगे, वह सुन्दर व अद्वितीय होगा।

- श्री शान्तानन्द सरस्वती महाराज शंकराचार्य,
ज्योतिर्मठ, बद्रीकाश्रम

When we take a retrospective view of our eight years of life with Swami Satyananda . . . never did a frown distort his forehead, nor a flash of fire escape from those bright and large eyes; and those lips of his that are wont to release in cadence words of wisdom, were never pursed and puckered. . .

A mind luminous with great thoughts, a temper permeated with an ethereal nature, Swami Satyananda is an immortal spirit fluttering its wings within the cage-like framework of his frail form, in anticipation of taking a Shelleyan skylark's flight into the transcendental realms of spiritual experience.

He is a very dynamo of energy, executing a variety of works with such skill and force, and a spirit so calm as if he is on holiday, that it would be difficult to find few more such examples. . . Swami Satyananda has been, through the past ten years, powering his marvellous mental energy, unabating enthusiasm and indefatigable effort into the various activities of the ashram.

That Swami Satyananda has a special genius for oratory is a matter of common knowledge

. . . Amazed by a lofty, impassioned and inspired speech of Swami Satyananda, delivered to them in Sanskrit, the most erudite among the pandits of the holy city of Banares, not only raised a roar by clapping their hands in appreciation, but spent an hour after the speech in exchanging among themselves expressions of admiration and wonder at the profound grasp he had of the traditional spiritual philosophic subject he had dealt with, at the great mastery he had established over that difficult language of Indian scholars, and the most powerful manner of his delivery. . .

Like an eagle or lion, Swami Satyananda is solitary in habits. At once orthodox and heterodox, classical in temper and modern in mood, he is a mild paradox. . .

When fortune fashioned Swami Satyananda she gave him intellect and will, talent and genius, strength and softness, a stomach and a feast, an abundance and an enjoyment, and above all, she endowed him lavishly with spiritual understanding and enlightenment. The unusual coalescence and co-existence of all these elements not only differentiate Swami Satyananda from the rest, but distinguish him as being 'great'.

Swami Sivananda-Krishnananda
Rishikesh

Sri Gurudev Swami Satyanandaji's ideal of a karma yogi and ideal sadhaka is a person of utter self-effacement, silent endurance, humility coupled with dynamism, zeal, tireless industry and the spirit of dedication. You are a perfect embodiment of all these. You are one of the pillars of the grand Divine Life structure which forms the main mission of Gurudev. You are indeed an ornament to this institution. . . You are adorned with the lofty virtues of vairagya, tyaga, dedication, singleness of purpose and guru bhakti to an astonishing degree. Your life is a living proof that the days of Dhruva, Prahlad and Nachiketa are not past. . . Yet, withal you are the soul of modesty, always humble, unassuming and simple.

Gurubhais and colleagues
Yoga-Vedanta Forest University



You have amply demonstrated in your life the truth of Gurudev's memorable utterances: "A saint need not advertise his atma-jnana; the vedantic aroma will waft itself around him and people will be mysteriously drawn to him."

You have courted no honours, sought no praise, invited no admirers, but today your lustre has irresistibly drawn to your holiness, admirers from all over the country who feel it is an honour to honour you and whose hearts, enriched in some manner or other by their contact with you, pour out soul-elevating songs of praise. . . It is a wonder of wonders that, what would take another a decade to acquire, comes to you in a day; and in whichever art you learn, you soon excel your own teachers and make them your students. . . Perfect desirelessness, unrivalled selflessness and absolute egolessness give you mastery over the mind and therefore great powers of concentration and application – the secret of success in all undertakings. The whole world is indebted to you.

The Students of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University
Rishikesh

स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के विश्व योग सम्मेलन में आकर प्रसन्नता हुई, योग गंगा चहुँ दिशि फैले, यही कामना है।



- स्वामी रंगनाथानन्द जी, कलकत्ता

This spiritual jewel has his own distinctive lustre of serene piety, a calmness and coolness born of courageous strength of will and mind, an earnestness and zeal for sincere honest work deeply rooted in his pure love and devotional service for the upliftment of mankind in general.
Yogiraj Sri Gauri Prasadji (Retd. Judge)
Rishikesh

वर्तमान संदर्भ में स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती का योग आन्दोलन बहुत बड़ी उपलब्धि है।

- डॉ. सम्पूर्णानन्द, राज्यपाल, राजस्थान

The masters, Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda are god-like personalities and their teachings are simple. What magnificent spiritual treasures flow from their divine lips, enlightening, comforting and soothing to all those who approach.

Param Guru Sri Swami Sivananda's great disciple Paramahansa Satyananda's whole life is an embodiment of total and unreserved surrender to that Supreme Consciousness manifest in all things.

A saint who believes that 'yoga is the culture of tomorrow', Paramahansa Satyananda has taken upon himself the heroic task of making people yoga-minded and resurrecting them from the obliviousness of the great heritage of India.

He appeared on the horizon of Indian culture at a time when the materialistic West was looking eagerly towards the ancient East for a lasting peace and an eternal joy. Humanity was struggling to narrow down the gulf between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. It was searching for a just meeting point where West could meet East. The age-old superstitions imposed by religions on men were melting. The development of science had equipped man with new possibilities and his psyche had brought him to the cross-roads of reason and thinking.

There is no limit to his bounty and generosity. Had it not been for the speedy and timely effort of Swami Satyananda to bring forth books and pamphlets in time, how could Swami Sivanandaji have met the demands and fulfilled his desire in disseminating spiritual culture?

Sri M. R. Shastri
Rishikesh

Swami Satyananda was a living example of complete detachment of the physical body from the self within. . . A rare all-rounder so to speak who has sacrificed his solitary life of samadhi to the busy and dynamic life of a true karma yogi who is doing selfless service with all his heart and soul, and with a spirit of keenness and drive seldom found in one so young.

Major-General Sri A. N. Sharma

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती ने योग संस्कृति का शृंगार जिस रूप में करने का संकल्प किया है, वह सर्वत्र स्तुत्य है।



- श्री मोरारजी देसाई

From time to time a special kind of man is born on earth who leaves society to gain greatness of spirit and then returns to the world to help others who are suffering, or who may themselves wish to follow the spiritual path. The world has a great history of such spiritual benefactors dating back to the vedic rishis, to the biblical prophets and seers, to Christ, Buddha, Mahavira, Mohammed, and more recently Paramahansa Yogananda, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and Swami Sivananda. One of these great saints of recent times is Paramahansa Satyananda who has most strongly advocated the integration of yoga into society, and encouraged the spiritual evolution of all people.

Swami Satyananda today has become the focal point of the modern movement for international yogic integration, which is currently creating a mass return to the ancient holistic techniques and precepts of the yogic science. People all over the world are now turning to yoga and to Swami Satyananda for a new direction and basic premise in life which they have found can bring them health and a spontaneous love for living, culminating in an understanding of the root meaning of man's multi-level existence. He is immortal in nature yet mortal in purpose, ever striving to give to the world a message and insight which can heal and strengthen, direct and uplift.

Devotees of Satyananda Ashram
Germany

योग का अर्थ है मुक्त होना। योग सम्राट स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी का प्रयास सराहनीय है।

- महर्षि मेही दास

Swami Satyananda, like his Guru Sivanandaji, is a master of the human mind, having explored the depths which only an unfettered, pure mind can reach. As such, he is fully aware of the problems, unhappiness and perplexity that occur in most peoples' lives. For this reason he is earnestly spreading yoga, based on his guru's teachings, to help people to attain physical and mental health and stability, and to tread the higher psychic and spiritual path.

Paramahansa Satyananda is a great torch to dispel the darkness of our living.

Smt. C. Saraswathy

व्यग्रता से भारत में जिस परम सत्य की खोज में आया, उसे स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती की योग साधना से प्राप्त किया।

- ब्रूस राबर्टसन, कनाडा

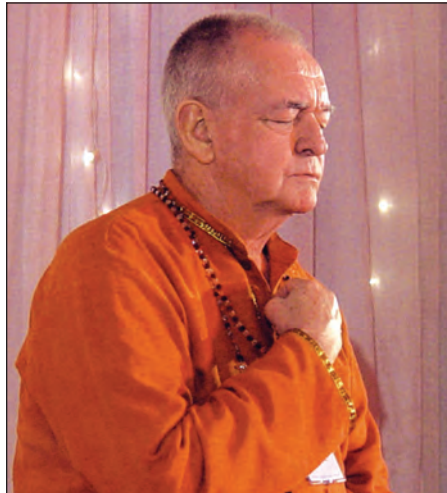
Young, charming and benevolent sannyasi as he is, he attracted me at the very first sight. His manners are 'de-luxe'. . . He is all love and grace.

Sri Keshavlal V. Shah
Bombay

स्वामी सत्यानन्दजी योग गंगा के भगीरथ हैं, प्रभु उन्हें सदैव सफलता दें।

- स्वामी मनुवर्य जी, अहमदाबाद।

Paramahansa Satyananda, say those who have heard him, is unique. The spiritual dynamism with which he moves is not conventional. Although he was a rigorous ashramite for twelve years, Swamiji has a deep interest in the individual



human being and the modern average man. Just as he has descended from the mountains to the plains, so also yogic philosophy has descended with him from the ivory metaphysical tower to the worldly sphere, as an intensely practical method for better life. Because the supreme values cannot be achieved, they are neglected. No effort is made towards reaching them. Swamiji's desire, both by exposition and initiation into the practices of yoga, is to make each of us take a first step towards the understanding of the importance of these values.

The light of the teachings of Paramahansa Satyananda has spread throughout the world, without racial barriers or discrimination as to creed, age, sex or condition. Throughout his life, dedicated to the service of humanity, he has exemplifyingly taught the virtues of a yogi. His life is a pure reflection of what he preaches and teaches. With his energetic and yet discreet activity, he has shown thousands of disciples the path of inner peace, the spiritual path, and the way of self-realization.

*Devotees of Satyananda Ashram
Australia*

Words are inadequate to express my respect and gratitude to you. I remember the great Karna of Mahabharata when I meditate upon your magnanimous and generous heart.

*Dr Janaki Sharma
Udaipur*

स्वामीजी का योग साहित्य भारत की अनुपम निधि है।

- श्री राम सुभग सिंह (कृषि मंत्री भारत सरकार)

स्वामी सत्यानन्दजी ने रहस्यों के आचरण से योग को मुक्त कर वैज्ञानिक युग में उपयोगी बना दिया।

- गुलजारी लाल नन्दा, गृहमंत्री

जिसे हम सोच ही रहे थे, स्वामी सत्यानन्दजी ने कर दिखाया।

- स्वामी तेजोमयानन्द सरस्वती, अफ्रीका

It is as a scientist that his contribution towards man's evolutionary destiny will be recognized for centuries to come. Swamiji's contribution in the field of medical education is visionary, compassionate and far-reaching.

*Swami Sanyam
London*

Satyam's mission is urgent and impatient of any procrastination. It is



to disseminate, reinterpret and revive the order of true and eternal dharma and also to reawaken the dormant glories of the spiritual sciences of ancient rishis.

*Upen Baxi
V. C. Delhi University*

His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa had the intuitive foresight of selecting a model disciple in the unique personality of Swami Satyanandaji.

*Sri B. N. Motivala
Bombay*

योग स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी की आवाज है।

- एम. फखरुद्दीन, भागलपुर

Swami Satyananda is India's brightest mind expounding tantric yoga and we are indeed fortunate to have him incarnate in this century.

*John Mumford
Australia*

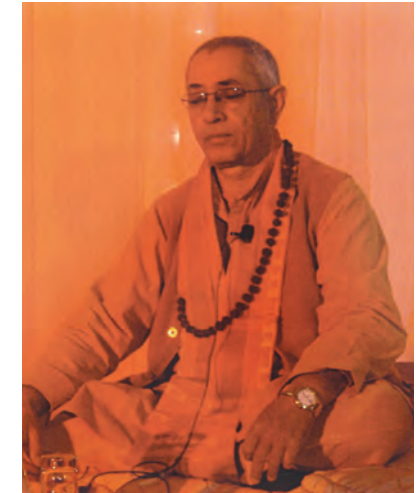
The stream of his eloquence comes forth from his heart. His style is unique for its harmonious blend of simplicity and force. The pure flame of Truth burns within him. . . His revolutionary spirit flashes forth in his talks.

*Sri Sivananda-Mukta
Delhi*

Ever active, ever cheerful, ever ready to serve the Master, simple, humble, dynamic and ever busy in some useful work – such is Swami Satyananda.

Sri Narayan Swamiji

Swami Satyananda Saraswati is dynamism personified. His success as yogi and teacher is proof that a man

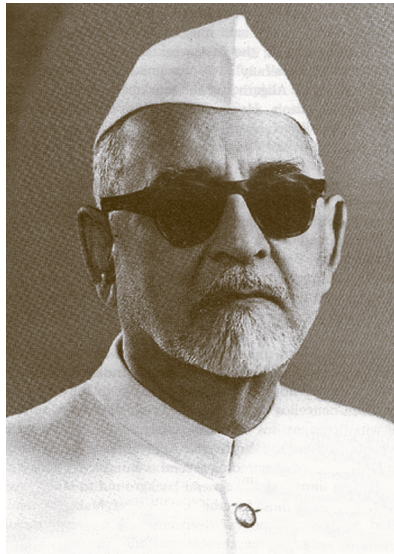


of ordinary means and education can rise to the pinnacle of human achievement. His auspicious life shines as a golden lantern for all earth's downtrodden resourceless people to follow.

Through his unending work and spiritual vision the Bihar School of Yoga has become the centre of a worldwide chain of ashrams and yoga schools which teach his unique blend of the ancient yogic sciences developed and refined in the light of western knowledge. It is this blend of East and West that has made Swami Satyananda able to bring the spiritual light of yoga to all the people of the world.

*Devotees of Satyananda Ashram
Italy*

स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय योग फेलोशिप की सफलता की कामना करता हूँ।



- उपराष्ट्रपति डॉ. जाकिर हुसैन

Swami Satyananda is one of the great thinkers and spiritual sadhus of the country who has dedicated his entire life and energy for the welfare of the people of the world. . . He is devoting his resources for creating an atmosphere of spiritual wisdom and sadachar good-life for developing a better society where human values will get top-most position.

Swami Harinarayananda
Bharat Sadhu Samaj

I know of very few in the ashram who would give up, like Swami Satyananda, their kutir (cottage) and even their bed to visitors when the rush is great, and sleep hither and thither without a bed. Hardly ever has he a full set of clothes to put on, or to sleep on – such is the virakti of Swami Satyananda and his heart!

Sri Ramkishore Arora (Magistrate)
Bareilly

मैं महसूस करता हूँ कि योग का सबसे आश्चर्यजनक पहलू इसकी विशद-समाहार शक्ति है। हर्ष का विषय है, स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती इस सर्वोत्तम योग विज्ञान का प्रचार-प्रसार कर रहे हैं।

- श्री क्लीथ हालोस्की, न्यूजीलैंड के प्रधानमंत्री

In him can be found a rare combination of penetrating intelligence and robust common sense. . . He will listen to all arguments with utmost courtesy but when it is time to act, he will act, most unobtrusively, as he considers best – and it will invariably be the most correct thing to do.

Sri Swami Sadananda

स्वामी सत्यानन्दजी को भगवान चन्द्रमौलेश्वर और विमलाम्बा शक्ति दें, कि वे योग को जन जीवन में फैलाते रहें।

- जगतगुरु श्री निरंजदेव तीर्थ, गोवर्धन पीठाधीश्वर

His devotion finds expression in many constructive channels; in him innocence and serenity are the basic virtues; his spirit of selfless service cannot help affecting the minds of those who have the chance to spend some time with him.

Sri Satya Bhola, M.A.
Meerut

In Sri Satyanandaji one finds the full-blown blossom – the practical echo of Sivananda.

Swami Sivananda-Muktananda
Ceylon

स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के योग साधना विश्व सभ्यता को भारत की महती देन है।



- डॉ. कर्णसिंह, राज्यपाल, जम्मू काश्मीर

Swami Satyanandaji is a veritable gem of incalculable merit. . . He is radiant with all the virtues needed for a sannyasi. He is a man of great fortitude and austerity. He has undergone several hardships and disciplined himself perfectly. He is a practical vedantin of high order and a dynamic karma yogi also. . .

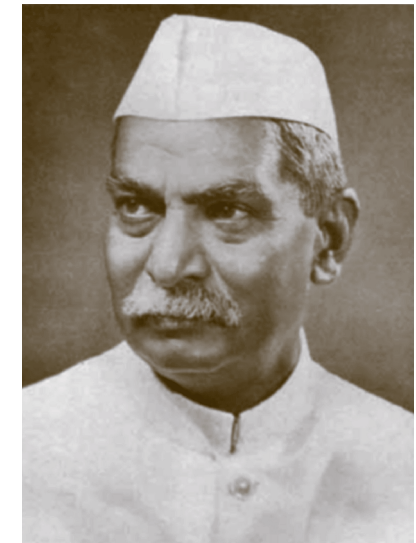
He never distinguished any work as being refined or inferior. Without the least hesitation or excuse he would willingly and gladly undertake any work and complete it with grace and refinement. . . There is no back-biting or tale-bearing nature in him. He was never the cause of irritation to anybody. He was always calm, cheerful, industrious and hardworking.

. . . By his extremely humble, obedient and adaptable nature he satisfied one and all with whom he happened to work. . . He was a man of few words and there was wit and humour in them. . . All felt joy in his company. His behaviour, from the highest to the lowest, was unique throughout.

The very principle of ego is absent in him. Anger, hatred, jealousy, greediness and other undesirable vices are absent in him. The world wants hundreds and millions of such Satyanandas for radiating joy and peace and noble principles of ideal life.

Swami Nijabodhonanda
Singhbum

योगिक संस्कृति के पुनरुत्थान का स्वामी सत्यानन्द जी के प्रयास का स्वागत है।



- राष्ट्रपति डॉ राजेन्द्र प्रसाद जी

He is not only a perfect saint but also a scholar of great repute. He has perceived the truth underlying philosophy and religion very minutely. His ideas and way of expression show an extraordinary amount of originality, deep thinking, industry, keen sense of insight and experience based on universality.

Malti Chandhiok M.A.
Amritsar

Today, in all corners of the universe
My pranas reverberate with divine melodies,
And in the luminosity of the moon and stars.
Take this light as a gift of illumination.
And all I ask in return is that you live
in its remembrance.



